

Blacks
and Jews
redux

Page 7

IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 14, NO. 20

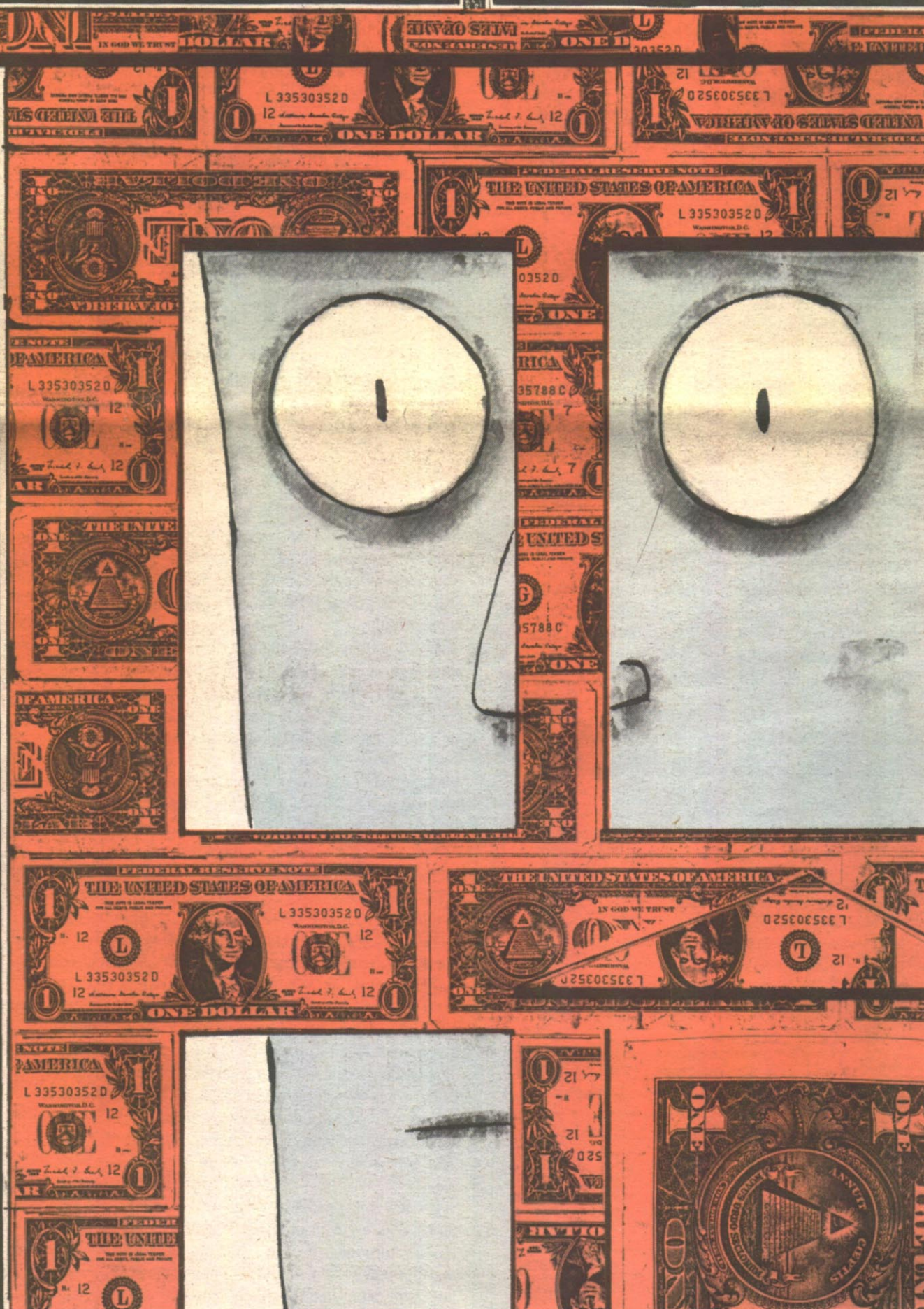
APRIL 11-17, 1990

\$1.25

A REAL EDUCATION (in corruption)

New York's
public school system
learns the hard
lessons of
decentralization.

Rob Polner reports
page 12



Kingdom united over Thatcher's taxing legacy

By Daniel Hellinger

LONDON

A peaceful protest by 250,000 against Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's widely detested "poll tax" last month turned into one of the city's worst riots of the century.

Police say a handful of anarchist groups who tried to storm the gates of 10 Downing Street instigated the violence that spread to Trafalgar Square. The demonstrators claim police used reckless and indiscriminate force, surrounding large numbers of activists—339 were arrested—and leaving them no alternative but to fight back. About 400 demonstrators and police officers were injured in the melee. And while Conservative Party leaders, including Thatcher, are blaming the violence on leftist elements within the Labour Party, the anti-tax movement may mean the end of an era for Britain's Iron Lady.

Conservatives prefer to call their new system of local taxation a "community charge," but even the rabidly right-wing tabloids call it a poll tax. The measure was designed by the Tories in the face of Thatcher's landslide election in 1987 to lighten the burden of the existing rates system—or property-tax system—on homeowners and businesses. The Tories were eager to reassess property values and implement the new levies before local governments were forced to raise taxes to compensate for budget cuts in government services. Under the old system, reasoned the Tories, only 14 million voters were paying for local government services, while 50 million others paid nothing. If the burden of taxation could be extended to all 64 million voters, and local councils' expenditures could be proportionately tied to the tax rate, presumably even councils controlled by leftist Labour elements would be forced to cut spending.

To accomplish this, the government decided to turn to a flat-rate head tax and to take away the local authorities power to tax businesses, the preferred choice of many Labour-governed townships. There is little doubt that the old system was badly flawed and in need of an overhaul, but few expected the government to enact such an extreme alternative. The new system was quickly dubbed the "poll tax" because the Tories claimed it would make local governments more fiscally accountable to voters.

The tax is supposed to bridge the gap between central government funding of local governments and local

spending by imposing a fee for local services on adults between 18 and 65 years old in place of real-estate taxes on homes. For political reasons, the Treasury calculated the sum the government would provide on an unrealistically low inflation estimate, resulting in a \$3 billion lapse between the government's original projections and what local authorities would actually have to raise to maintain local services. (The Ministry of the Environment, responsible for local government affairs, has refused to divulge the method of calculation.) As a result, even staunchly Conservative communities have found themselves needing to raise an average of 31 percent more than what the government originally estimated. Because the new rates are tied to spending, the poorest communities—ones that have suffered the most under Thatcher's laissez-faire policies—will pay the highest prices. The tax is levied on each individual in a household, and even the most indigent are expected to pay a minimum of 20 percent of the base charge. The larger the family, the higher the levy: while the average household bill in London's affluent Westminster District is estimated at \$266, average bills in the working-class Camden and Hackney townships are estimated at \$843 and \$876 respectively.

A bitter pill: Among those hardest hit are middle-class pensioners whose life savings disqualify them from tax relief. The National Federation of Self-Employed and Small Businesses has found that the some 500,000 small shopkeepers throughout England and Wales—Thatcher's father among them—face drastic increases in their central government business and local taxes. The combined rates of more than one-third of the shopkeepers will double, and one in 10 faces triple their current rates. Hundreds of shops and pubs throughout London are displaying posters urging their patrons to support the non-payment campaign of the All Britain Anti-Poll-Tax Federation (ABATF).

The poll tax also is a bitter pill for many of the skilled working- and lower-class voters who shifted their allegiance from Labour to the Tories because they were offered mortgages to purchase public council housing that Thatcher had sold to the private sector. Unlike in the U.S., the mortgages vary with inflation and prevailing interest rates, which have risen to 15 percent—well above the current 7 percent inflation rate. And so the mortgage payments of this new class of homeowners, cultivated to provide a basis for a stable Tory majority in the future, have risen drastically. The combined effect of the new tax, rising housing costs and increased unemployment and inflation are driving voters back into Labour's arms. Polls show that if a general election were held today with Neil Kinnock heading the Labour Party and Margaret Thatcher at the Conservative helm, Labour would take well over 50 percent of the vote. Such a defeat would leave Conservatives with a mere 100 seats in Parliament and would annihilate the Social Democrats, Liberals and Greens.

That the levies have inflamed passions in Labour strongholds would hardly stir discontent among Conservative Party faithfuls. But a host of other inequities and miscalculations by the government has led to a rank-and-file revolt among middle- and working-class Tories—more than 1,000 marched in the demonstration. After learning last July that the average tax rate was likely to be double that of the government's projections, the "Tory Reform Group" issued its first critique of the tax: "It has all the markings of a disaster. The poll tax is fair only in the sense that the Black Death was fair. It is indiscriminate, striking at young and old, rich and poor, employed and unemployed."

Conservative wisdom: More establishment-oriented Tories doubted the scheme's wisdom from the start, but the Thatcherite zealots seized control of party policy in 1987. Not only had their heroine rescued the party from a 20 percent deficit in the polls but the media campaign against the "loony left" had weakened public confidence in the efficiency and prudence of local government. The Conservatives pressed ahead with the tax and convinced Thatcher to abandon initial plans to phase it in over a 10-year period and instead implement it in a single "big bang."

Because local property taxes were slated to rise first under reassessment in Scotland in 1989, the poll-tax legislation ramrodded through Parliament in 1988 provided that the new system would be implemented one year earlier there. More than 1 million Scots did not pay their poll

tax last year, and it was evident at last month's demonstration that millions more will not pay in England and Wales. (The prospect of local authorities attempting to collect such a tax from Catholics in Northern Ireland is unthinkable.) Ironically, the first payments were due on April Fool's Day of this year, and last month's demonstration was timed by poll-tax resistance leaders to take place just after the 64 million households received their new bills.

It seems, for the next election at least, that Britain has returned to a two-party system. Voters are expressing discontent with the poll tax and inflated interest rates by turning to Labour—not to the Social Democrats or the Liberals, as they did at the end of a strife-filled era of Labour government between 1974 and 1979. With two-thirds of Tory Parliament members facing eviction from

INSIDE STORY

their seats, pressure is building for Thatcher to step aside and let Michael Hezeltine, the former defense minister, take the reins. Polls indicate that Labour's lead would be cut in half if Hezeltine replaced Thatcher as head of the party.

So far the Iron Lady has reacted to behind-the-scenes pressure to remove her with characteristic persistence. But there is growing fear within Tory ranks that Thatcher's usefulness and welcome are worn out. Business and financial elites are keen to oust her before the other 11 European Community members tire of her resistance to integration into the European monetary system by 1992. They see such a union as a way to bolster the faltering pound and head off the looming recession.

Ideological fallout: While Thatcher has recovered from low approval ratings in the past, a combination of deep-seated disdain for the poll tax, bleak economic prospects, fear about her ideological rigidity in elite circles and disunity among Conservative Party ranks make another comeback unlikely. The main question seems to be whether she will lead the party to an ignoble defeat in the general election, slated for 1991, or whether enough Tory Parliament members will revolt and forcibly remove her during this fall's party conference. The prime minister shows no signs of going quietly or voluntarily, and right-winger Norman Tebbit has promised to carry the Thatcherite standard into the battle for leadership should she resign. Hezeltine thus will likely inherit a bitterly divided party should he prevail in a leadership struggle.

While Labour leader Kinnock and his moderates would benefit electorally from Thatcher's ouster, they have given little indication of what they would do about the poll tax other than "replace it with something fairer." Most likely, they would propose an updated version of the old system, which won't solve the basic problem of how to develop an adequate and fair method of funding local government. By not posing an alternative and by threatening to discipline the 30 Parliament members who have announced they will not pay the poll tax, Kinnock has shown that he can reap the benefits of mass discontent while maintaining his image as a "responsible" leader.

But this confidence will do little to enhance a Kinnock-led government's ability to put forth a poll-tax solution. It also leaves those who can't and won't pay the tax with no alternative but to look to the Socialist Worker Party and Labour's militant wing for leadership. Fringe anarchist and Maoist groups also have found the rebellious atmosphere conducive to recruitment, particularly as the underclass continues to swell as a result of economic decline and Thatcherite policies. The Conservative dream of creating a comprehensive head tax has been thwarted, and Britain faces a long, hot summer and a politically fervent autumn.

Daniel Hellinger, a political science professor at Webster University in St. Louis, is currently visiting the United Kingdom.

CONTENTS

Inside Story: Thatcher's taxing problem	2
Transition in Nicaragua	3
In Person	4
In Short	6
Blacks and Jews: mending a troubled relationship	7
Old nukes is bad nukes in East Germany	9
East bloc politics and pollution	10
New York City's education stagnation	12
Editorial	14
Letters/Sylvia	15
Dialogue: Misrepresenting the Nation of Islam	16
Viewpoint: On legalizing Michigan marijuana	17
In Print: V is for Vineland, Pynchon's latest	18
Conspiracies made easy reading	19
LBJaded—dawn of the sound bite	20
In the Arts: Safer sex shorts	21
Brecht's Baal and chain	21
Classifieds	23
Ode to the accountant	24

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1990 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 14, No. 20) published April 11, 1990, for newsstand sales April 11-17, 1990.



Military vehicles were ambushed by rebels the same day a demobilization agreement was signed by top contra commanders in Honduras.

© Paul Dix, Impact Visuals

Nicaragua's weary reconciliation maneuvers

By William Gasperini

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

WITH MANY SECTORS OF NICARAGUAN society still recovering from the shock of the election upset in February, Nicaragua is moving slowly and warily toward April 25, when Violeta Chamorro will take office as president.

On the whole, the process has proceeded remarkably well. Special transition teams for the Sandinistas and the National Opposition Union (UNO) have held talks on the transfer of power, designating subsidiary commissions to study the details of everything from industry to culture.

Economic advisers to the incoming government have been preparing an emergency plan to handle Nicaragua's critical economic situation, while Chamorro and her advisers work mainly on the selection of Cabinet positions. A tone of moderation prevails in the local press as the various sectors of the country's political life seem to be seeking real national reconciliation.

As expected, however, the questions of control over the Sandinista-created military and the future of the contras have proven the most difficult elements to handle in the transition process. Although two recent agreements have been reached on both issues, it remains to be seen how they will work in practice.

In a special transition accord announced March 27 the Sandinistas agreed to yield control over the armed forces to Chamorro. In return the incoming government promised to "respect the professionalism and integrity" of the armed forces—by not trying to dismantle them—while the Sandinistas acknowledged that the army and security police forces should be apolitical and gradually reduced in size.

All sides hailed this document for demonstrating willingness to compromise, as well as satisfying the opposition's longstanding insistence that a clear distinction exist among party, state and armed forces.

At the same time Chamorro officials signed an agreement with top contra commanders in Honduras under which the rebels are slated to demobilize. The document specifies that rebels still in Honduran base camps will disarm by April 20, while those inside Nicaragua will move into security enclaves to be established by a United Nations peacekeeping force known as ONUCA.

In transit: Demobilization in the Honduran camps will have little meaning, however, since few fighters now remain there. Given the stepped-up international pressure for their demobilization, the majority of the estimated 10,000 rebels had infiltrated back into Nicaragua even before their commanders signed the agreement.

Moreover, chief contra commander Israel Galeano "Franklin" did not sign the accord and has had little to say since. A careful reading of the document shows that the accord makes no specific reference to "disarmament" for those contras who will move into the security zones. Rebels interviewed in the field seemed almost surprised at the suggestion that "demobilization" ultimately means disarmament.

"We won't put down our arms until the Sandinistas are really out of power and start to disarm as well," said a contra field commander known as Champion. "The Sandinistas have signed agreements before only to break their promises after. We can't just give up like that."

Champion said he was commander of a company—roughly 180 men—and had left Honduras several weeks before. With the in-

creased contra presence in the countryside, frequent clashes have recently occurred with Sandinista troops. In the worst incident, 12 soldiers died when rebels ambushed two military vehicles the very day the demobilization agreement was signed.

The contras maintain that it was military pressure alone that led the Sandinistas to hold elections, and they therefore claim the February 25 results as their victory. Contra leaders have also hinted they feel a certain resentment that the UNO government has not given them the recognition they think they deserve.

Meanwhile the pressure for a final demobilization increased after the April 2-3 summit meeting of the five Central American presidents in the newly built Nicaraguan coastal resort of Montelimar. The five leaders again called for the rebels to disarm before the change in government this month—as they had at three summits last year.

Logistically speaking, disarmament before this month's transfer of power appears impossible. The full ONUCA force of roughly 1,000 men—mostly from Spain and Venezuela—has not yet arrived in Nicaragua, and the security zones are only now being established. Diplomats and other observers estimate the process could take several months.

A tone of moderation prevails in the local press as various political sectors seek real national reconciliation.

The Sandinistas say the timeline is not the major factor. "The logistics are not the important thing; what matters most is that the political will exists on the regional level for their disarmament," said Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry General Secretary Alejandro Bendana. "This message should be heard loud and clear in Washington, as the last thing the Chamorro administration needs is to assume office with two standing armies."

The Bush administration's stand on the contras is somewhat ambiguous, although U.S. diplomats concur that the demobilization process should at least begin before April 25.

Land mines: A full resolution to the contra problem, however, appears to depend on more than general demobilization. Conflicts over confiscated land may encourage some rebels to continue fighting—particularly against current state-established farm co-operatives whose members are organized in heavily armed militias. After so many years of bitter conflicts, Hatfield-and-McCoy scenarios continue to exist in remote areas among people with old scores to settle.

"The Sandinistas feel really bitter about losing, and there are more people than ever walking around with guns," said Roger Padilla, a UNO official elected to the municipal council in the northern town of San Juan del Rio Coco. "People are used to being armed up here, and no one wants to be first to disarm unless those on the other side do likewise."

Tensions are running very high not only in Padilla's town but throughout the rural war zones as citizens prepare for the opposition to take power. More delicate negotiations will likely be necessary to grapple with such thorny issues as land tenure.

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 11-17, 1990 3

By Joel Bleifuss

Whose are those cloven hooves?

The controversy over federal funding of the arts may have died on the congressional level, but the flames are still being fanned by Pat Buchanan, the former White House communications director whose syndicated column is read coast to coast. This latter-day witch hunter recently wrote, "The arts crowd is after more than our money, more than an end to the congressional ban on funding obscene and blasphemous art. It is engaged in a cultural struggle to root out the old America of family, faith and flag and recreate society in a pagan image. The maneuvering in America's Kulturkampf is over, the forces are now engaged: and a bewildered defensive Christian society is absorbing one blow after another. ... The homo-fascist assault on St. Patrick's Cathedral, the non-negotiable demand that all schoolchildren be instructed in the use of condoms, the drive to downgrade Western culture in college curricula...this is a war about the fundamental values of this country."

Betsy Ross reincarnate

We recently received this suggestion from an unnamed "weirdo" *In These Times* subscriber: "I am a 71-year-old lady who sometimes gets weird ideas. Like, for instance: if an individual or group of individuals made their own flag(s) with burning in mind. But if they made them with one less star, one more star, one less stripe, one more stripe, stripes half-red, half-white, all sorts of combinations. Just as long as at no time in our past history was there really an American flag of that pattern. Then, with cameras running, hold them stretched out for all to see (if taken to court) and light up. Would all of this hoopla, by the time it was over, make those in favor of changing our Constitution change their minds because they realized this could go on and on and on and? Not to mention the laughter at their expense. No, I do not have a patent on this idea. Feel free to pass it on. [Signed:] Weirdo."

Bush youth

What comes to mind when you think of student organizations that secretly collect information about their colleagues? Nazi and Communist youth groups—and now the College Republicans, at least at Colorado University. Kevin McCullen reports in the *Rocky Mountain News* that the Grand Old Party animals of Boulder photographed and tape-recorded fellow students protesting U.S. aid to El Salvador outside the office of Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO). The demonstration was sponsored by the local Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), a group that in the 1989-90 school year received \$465.35 in student-activity funds. As Chris Haggerty, co-chair of College Republicans explains, "We're students here, and we feel it's our job to scrutinize groups like CISPES and others who use student fees."

Misadventures in moving

Later this month Oliver North will visit Chicago to address the 23rd Annual Forum on Moving—a seminar sponsored by Atlas Van Lines for about 800 executives who work in the relocation and transportation industry. North, a convicted felon who earns about \$25,000 per appearance, is a logical choice for speaker. None of the movers in his audience will have shipped so much so far so illegally.

McTrash-stained money

Over the past few years environmentalists have targeted McDonald's for continuing to sell billions of non-biodegradable styrofoam burger packages. As part its McToxics Campaign last year, the Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste (CCHW), asked people to observe Earth Day by sending their styro-trash to local McDonald's outlets. This year the multinational burger chain counterattacked. The company's public-relations officers took \$700,000 out of petty cash and went shopping for some good publicity. First stop, San Francisco, where McDonald's offered to finance the Sierra Club's youth activities for the 20th anniversary celebration of Earth Day. But the board of the Sierra Club refused to touch the money. The club's youth sections had worked with CCHW's McToxics Campaign the year before, and board members reasoned that taking styro-tainted money would send the wrong message to children. So McDonald's took its lucre to the nation's capital, where the burger giant found a pliant prostitute, the World Wildlife Fund/Conservation Foundation—the organization William Reilly ran before President George Bush named him to head the Environmental Protection Agency.

McCology: The fruit of this union between multinational corporation and environmental organization is *Wecology*, a 16-page



Under the gaze of past mayors, Ben Nichols takes Ithaca into the future.

With the following profile of Ithaca, N.Y., Mayor Ben Nichols. In These Times inaugurates a new weekly feature. It will highlight women and men whose lives amplify the tenor of these times: activists who struggle for a better world and castouts who try to survive in this one; artists who teach us to rejoice in our contradictions and censors who prescribe a cultural orthodoxy; politicians who ask to lead us up the high road and demagogues who beckon down the low road. We hope you enjoy meeting these folks up close and "In Person."

—Joel Bleifuss, "In Person" editor

Ben Nichols: 'sewer socialist'

By Dave Lindorff

Ithaca's new mayor, Ben Nichols, a retired electrical engineering professor at Cornell University might seem an unlikely Red, but anyone in this town's large and diverse progressive community will report that he's also an unlikely engineer, one who has been active in Ithaca's left since 1940, when he came to Cornell as a student.

A "red diaper" baby, Nichols was born in 1919 on Staten Island, the son of two Russian immigrant Communists. "My earliest memories are of being dragged along to street corners by my parents where other party members would give talks to passersby," says Nichols, the father of two and grandfather of five. His own parents—working-class members of the party—rarely spoke at such events, he says. "They were the ones who carried the stepladder and handed out the leaflets."

A tall man with a large drooping face like that of a bloodhound, Nichols might cut an imposing figure, but his slightly rumpled dress and a certain air of

introspection, even shyness, in his bearing, combined with an unrepentant New York accent, make him seem more a New York City College professor than a fire-breathing radical politico.

When, at an Ithaca Press Club luncheon where he was blasting the local media for poor coverage, *Ithaca Journal* managing editor Jacqueline Powers tossed him the puffball question of how he liked being mayor, Nichols' response was immediate. "I love it!" he said. "It's really nice to be able to go to a department head and, instead of making some suggestion, just tell the person what you want done."

Welcome to the new Ithaca, where the outs are in and, instead of being social critics complaining about "the system," the left is in the unaccustomed position of actually having to decide what to do.

Sticking together: Ithaca, a town of 30,000, is a progressive island in the Republican sea of upstate New York, but its elected government, despite a few activists on the city council, has always been mainstream Democratic. Nichols' election was the culmination of a year's hard organizing by a coalition of disparate, sometimes antagonistic groups. In April 1989, leaders from the labor, minority, gay and lesbian, feminist and environmental communities met—often in Nichols' house—to forge a grand coalition that could take city hall. They chose Nichols, a former chairman of the Ithaca Democratic Socialists of America and longtime friend of minorities and unionized workers, after he was able to win over the environmentalists. In the previous two mayoral elections the greens' standard bearer, Alderman Dan Hoffman, had narrowly lost the Democratic primary to incumbent Mayor John Gutenberger, who was backed by organized labor and the minority community.

But in last September's primary Nichols handily beat the three-term incumbent. The ensuing mayoral campaign was run brilliantly. The coalition hung together, and in November Nichols won a squeaker

against Jean Cookingham, a soft-spoken and grandmotherly Republican attorney.

Ithaca's new mayor is acutely aware of the irony of his own electoral triumph at a time of American conservatism and upheaval in the socialist world. Mikhail Gorbachov, says Nichols, "is trying to create democratic socialism in the Soviet Union," while in Poland and East Germany, "we're seeing a complete surrender to conservative capitalist views."

Meanwhile, in the U.S., Nichols despairs at what he sees as a lack of progressive leadership in the Democratic Party, on whose ticket he ran last November. "Even outside the party, aside from Jesse Jackson, who's a very special case, we don't have that leadership." He declines to view his victory in Ithaca—or the establishment of other leftist municipal governments across the U.S.—as offering any kind of new political model. "Maybe we can work together somehow," he suggests, "but we need more progressive national leadership."

Nichols and the contentious but solidly progressive council that backs him have become the latest in a small string of leftist mayors and city councils across America who are trying to experiment with what was known in early 20th-century Milwaukee as "sewer socialism."

Engineering a new era: And it is in this civic arena of public works where Nichols' engineering bent manifests itself. While many a young radical might chafe at the details of managing the existing system, Ithaca's 70-year-old mayor is made for the job, reveling in the minutiae of government—appointing boards and commissions, conferring with city department heads, visiting community groups, meeting with fellow progressive leaders.

"Ben's the kind of guy who takes real pleasure in making incremental improvements in the way the machine of government works," says Al Davidoff, the local United Auto Workers president who served as Nichols' campaign director last year.

As a manager, Nichols is clearly in his element. But he is also a socialist without a party, and both he and his supporters haven't figured out what to do about it.

In a cluttered conference room in the office of the Tompkins-Cortland Labor Coalition, on a Saturday in March the Progressive Forum, a discussion group composed of Ithaca's progressive leaders, was meeting with their new mayor to discuss issues and map out strategies for the coming year. The agenda on the blackboard said it all: mayor's report, how to present the idea of a progressive income tax as an alternative to the property tax, establishment of a new commission on rental housing, ways to encourage formation of a tenants union, how to work with the hostile local media, the problem of drug abuse.

But the liveliest discussion came when the item labeled "organization" was reached. That subject brings up Nichols' role in Ithaca politics and his relationship to the movement that put him in office.

Although everyone in the room kept turning to the new mayor for recognition, as though he were the moderator by right of office, Nichols always deferred to the woman who had been selected by the group to chair the session. He seemed genuinely interested in all suggestions.

Most local observers on both the left and right are quick to compliment Nichols on his managerial competence. But many supporters—including Davidoff himself—express concern about another side of this veteran political activist: a certain gruffness and impatience with those not fully in agreement with him or who lack his understanding of an issue.

When, for instance, a young journalism student asked Nichols—at the Ithaca Press Club luncheon mentioned above—about his plans for low-income housing, Nichols pounced on her brusquely. "You

have to know a lot of background before you can ask a question like that," he snapped. "I'm not going to answer it." Nichols offered to meet with the student another time, but at that later meeting he was impatient and short, the student claimed.

Many others have also complained that Nichols is not listening to them or planning strategically for his two-year term. One Nichols supporter says, "His personal style and decision-making process has been a very important obstacle to maintaining a vision beyond his own of what should be happening. It seems to me we all need to sit down and tell him this. He's alienated a lot of people, and it's frustrating because we all have a stake here. We are all affiliated with this guy."

But not everyone on the left agrees with this assessment. Michael Cohen, a leader of the Rainbow Coalition in Ithaca, says, "I think Nichols has been doing an excellent job so far. His appointments to local commissions have been good, and those are important things to accomplish early in the term. The worst thing we could do would be to have a mayor who can't run the city."

One man, one mission: If Nichols can be faulted, it is not because he is unwilling to listen but because he doesn't seem able to lead the otherwise disparate coalition that put him in office. His campaign for mayor generated a tremendous sense of excitement and empowerment in the various groups that formed his coalition, but the historic rivalry and distrust between the green and red elements of Nichols' campaign coalition have re-emerged and threaten to erupt without a greater unifying effort. Inevitably, the excitement of electoral victory has diminished in the face of the necessities of governing.

Nichols, for his part, while acknowledging criticism from his supporters, tosses the problem back in their laps. "Look, I'm now the mayor," he says. "I'm not running a campaign anymore. What people are going to have to recognize is that there has to be a progressive movement created in this city, and that that is not my responsibility. I can help build it, but I can't be the leader. That's what's wrong with the Rainbow Coalition: it's built around Jesse Jackson. I would love to have a progressive movement putting pressure on me, but the movement should not be depending on me. It should be ready to replace me."

"Our problem is that unlike the movements in Burlington, Vt., or Santa Monica, Calif., we didn't run as a slate. The differences among us are enormous. In electing me we skipped an important step, and now we have to take it."

The problem has been made all the more acute by the local daily paper, the *Ithaca Journal*, which has repeatedly focussed upon alleged—but not demonstrated—distrust of Nichols among the city's business elite. Yet despite what Nichols says, it seems clear that unless he uses his new position as a rallying point to create a base of support he may find himself unable to push his programs through city council.

A regular at the local squash courts, Nichols is in good health. It's a good bet that he will run for mayor again. Meanwhile, he is confident that his first term will be a success. "My vision is more of a sense of motion than a list of specific things," he says. "I want people in the minority community to feel that things are finally happening for them. If there's one thing that I want to be able to say at the end of two years, it's that we have given hope to the lost generation of young kids living in poverty."

"But I do feel handicapped by the lack of a political movement," Nichols adds. "The development of such a movement is the key to keeping things going after me and keeping solid any gains we make."

Dave Lindorff is an Ithaca, N.Y.-based freelance writer.

booklet "presented by World Wildlife Fund" and "sponsored by your local McDonald's restaurants." *Wecology* is an insidious piece of propaganda. Sure, it gives kids nice tips on how they can help the environment, but it also promotes the biggest environmental fraud of our time—the idea that plastic packaging should be recycled rather than abolished. The making of plastic requires the use of finite petroleum resources and produces large quantities of toxic waste and emissions—all for a product that is not biodegradable. In addition to promoting the plastics industry, *Wecology* acts as an apologia for McDonald's. Take the following condensed excerpt from the booklet, which I've annotated in italics. "Today much of what we throw out isn't naturally degradable. [What's wrong with the word 'biodegradable?' This is a prime example of what environmental scholar Barry Commoner calls *linguistic detoxification*.] In Columbia, Conn., students at the Horace W. Porter Elementary School separate the plastic trays, cups and utensils from their lunches so they can be sent to a recycling plant. Products made out of recycled materials are all around you. Last week's Big Mac container may also be on its way to a new life as a yo-yo, park bench, hair comb, cassette or lots of other things.... Scientists say that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are helping to eat a hole in the atmosphere. Several years ago McDonald's in the U.S. stopped using food packaging that



contained fully halogenated CFCs. [As Curtis Moore writes in the *Washington Post*, 'This is not a lie, but it's certainly not the truth—McTruth, maybe, but not the real thing.' Instead of CFCs, McDonald's packaging contains HCFC-22, which is less harmful to the ozone layer but still destructive.] Based on the best available information on the environmental impacts of different types of packaging, McDonald's continues to believe that polystyrene is environmentally better than the present alternatives, and it can be recycled. In more and more McDonald's you will find two waste bins—one for recycling plastics, and one for other trash. McDonald's is involved in recycling projects that create all kinds of new uses for recycled plastic waste, including plastic lumber for parks and playgrounds. [McDonald's recycling efforts are non-profitable public-relations gimmicks financed by the National Polystyrene Recycling Coalition, which in turn gets its money from oil companies and plastics manufacturers.] McDonald's believes the rain forests of the world should be protected. McDonald's does not, has not, and will not purchase beef from rain forest or recently deforested rain forest land. [Of course, cattle don't graze in rain forests and the word 'recently' provides McDonald's a temporal loophole.] Together we can make a cleaner world. Join the growing chorus of recyclers. Start a school recycling program, recycle at home and write the National Recycling Coalition [a Washington-based recycling organization that in the last two years has been polluted by waste-industry officials and their money]. Help Help clean up your community. Contact Glad's Annual [plastic] Bag-a-thon—the largest cleanup and recycling program in the U.S. If you choose to care about the planet, you could leave the world greener than you found it."

Microwave a witch's brew

Microwave pizzas, waffles, french fries, popcorn, etc., cook with a sizzle because their packaging contains "heat susceptors" made of metalized plastic. Lisa Lefferts and Stephen Schmidt report in *Nutrition Action* that in 1988 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) microwaved corn oil in heat-susceptor packages and discovered that each package tested released chemicals into the oil. Les Borodinsky, an FDA chemist, says the adhesives that hold the packaging together are a "real witch's brew"—benzene, toluene and xylene—all known or suspected carcinogens. To resolve concerns about public safety, the FDA has asked the corporations that make microwave packages to identify the chemicals their packages release and submit data on the health hazards these chemicals pose.

By Kira Jones

Amnesty phones home

Amnesty International has called on the attorney general of Illinois to investigate charges by 14 black men that they were tortured while in the custody of a Chicago police commander. The men claim that Commander Jon Burge, a former military-police interrogator in Vietnam, brutalizes his suspects with electroshock, suffocation, Russian roulette, burnings, beatings and threats of mutilation and death. The claims date from 1972 to 1990, and, in several cases, the Illinois Supreme Court has ruled confessions taken by Burge and his detectives to be inadmissible. Amnesty workers picked up the case from an article in the Chicago Reader that chronicled Burge's 1989 civil-rights trial in which he was accused of torturing Andrew Wilson. The presiding federal judge refused to allow the testimonies of other alleged Burge victims who came forward during the close of the trial, and, despite overwhelming physical evidence, the commander was acquitted. A local coalition that formed during the trial also is demanding the investigation and dismissal of Burge.

Traveling light

The Connecticut-based Travelers Insurance company has agreed to offer \$100,000 mortgages in place of the minimum \$1 million it had previously required because of pressure from family-farm advocates. Most beginning or returning farmers need refinancing loans of only about \$250,000, according to the Land Stewardship Project (LSP). An agricultural lender since the turn of the century, Travelers foreclosed on 1 million acres of farmland in the late '80s, an all-time high for the company. But the majority of the land was sold to the likes of meat-packing giant Hormel, as well as absentee investors and large-scale farm producers. Now the company has announced it will sell its last 8,700 acres of Midwestern land—worth an estimated \$5 million—at the new minimum loan amount. Unfortunately, the gesture is merely symbolic, says the LSP, which plans to maintain pressure on Travelers to continue to practice less discriminatory lending following its "yard sale." Travelers also is exploring purchasing loans from rural banks—the company would hold 85 percent of loans of \$1 million or more, while local banks would act as servicers and hold the remaining 15 percent. The reinvestment, in turn, would give local banks cash to lend to moderate- and small-scale family producers.

Testing the test ban

More than 1,000 non-violent demonstrators were arrested during the first week of April as thousands gathered from across the U.S. and Europe to protest nuclear-weapons testing at the Nevada Test Site in Las Vegas. The demonstration marked the public signing of an "International People's Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty" by representatives of the Western Shoshone Nation, the Soviet "Nevada Movement," and Japanese, Dutch and East and West German independent peace movements. The treaty commits the signers to do all they can to close and dismantle all nuclear-weapons testing facilities and investigate and clean up all contaminated waste sights worldwide.

A zone of one's own

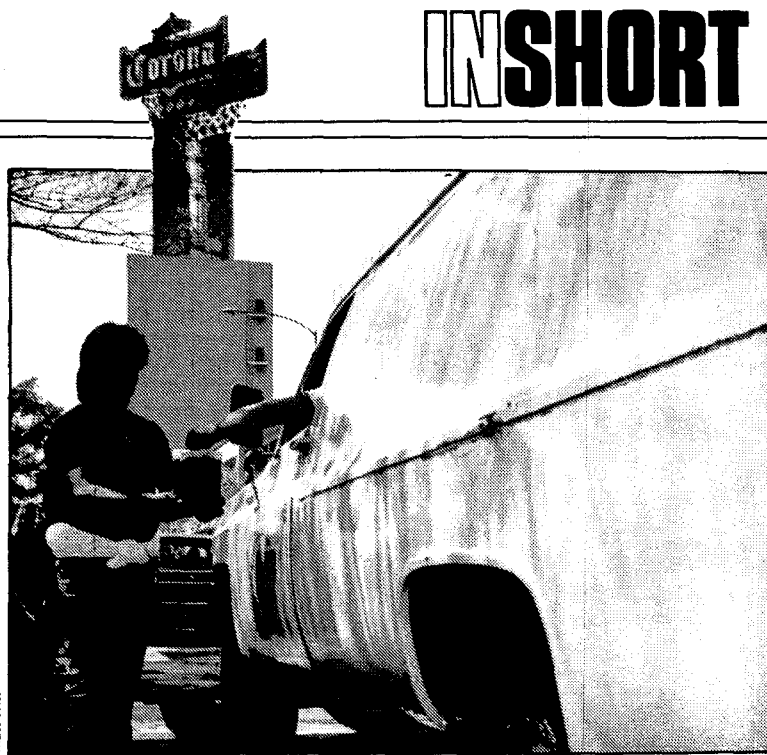
Voters in Ann Arbor, Mich., last week designated their hometown a "Zone of Reproductive Freedom" by a 2-to-1 margin. If in the future Michigan's legislature passes restrictive anti-choice legislation, a woman could opt to travel to Ann Arbor to get an abortion and pay a maximum penalty of \$5. Protection from state restrictions would apply only within city limits, however, and doctors involved would still face potential action against their medical licenses.

A blast from the not-so-distant past

A three-judge appellate court in Mississippi has decided that the state is running a segregated higher-education system. The February ruling is a major victory for the plaintiffs in a 15-year-old lawsuit charging that the state's three historically black universities receive proportionately less money and resources than the five historically white universities. The suit, filed by North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, also seeks parity with white schools in the area of educational opportunities. After declaring Mississippi's university system adequately desegregated, U.S. District Judge Neal Biggers dismissed the suit in 1987. But the panel's ruling sends it back to the courts for further arguments.

Please send timely news about local activities, followups on stories we've run or other interesting bits of information—including your address and phone number—to: Kira Jones, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

INSHORT



Modelo Brewery workers in Mexico City collect money to support their strike.

Workers ask for boycott of Corona and Modelo beer

MEXICO CITY—The next time you think about buying Corona or Modelo beer, think again.

More than 5,000 Modelo Brewery employees are out of work thanks to a recent ruling upholding the government's denial of their constitutional right to strike.

The action came six weeks after 5,200 workers walked off the job February 15 in a contract dispute over safer working conditions, better pay and improved benefits.

Although Mexico's constitution guarantees workers the right to strike, the government declared the strike "non-existent," opening the door for Modelo Brewery—which also produces Corona beer—to fire all strikers, withdraw recognition of the union and abolish the union's contract.

The workers are now calling for an international boycott of Corona and Modelo beers and are asking that letters of support be sent to them. They say American support for a boycott is particularly important, as the U.S. is the company's key market.

For years management and corrupt union leaders imposed by the government-affiliated Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) failed to correct serious health and safety problems at the Mexico City brewery.

Workers suffer lung damage from hazardous grain dust not controlled by proper ventilation. Others work in temperatures as high as 140 degrees and as low as 26 degrees, sometimes both in the same shift. Vision problems due to poor lighting and repetitive job tasks are common among workers who inspect about 1 million bottles of beer each shift on each of 17 production lines, six days a week. Back problems plague packing workers who each lift up to 33,000 pounds of beer per day. The workers earn a basic wage of \$9.60 a day.

The workers are also seeking the right to retire with 30 years of service regardless of age. At present, a retiree must both be 60 years old and have 35 years of service. Few workers ever qualify.

"The company wants you to work until you can't—and then die," said Corona Modelo worker Miguel Angel Cervantes. "They don't want to be paying benefits to someone who isn't producing anymore."

CTM chief Fidel Velasquez endorsed the company firings as well as the government's declaration that the strike is non-existent. He organized a replacement CTM "union" composed of about 20 strikebreakers and negotiated a new contract with the company and the Mexican government's labor department.

Earlier this month a judge issued a two-sentence unsigned ruling upholding the government's decree that the strike was illegal. The judge had given the workers five days in which to post a cash bond of 1 billion pesos (about \$370,000) just to obtain a hearing.

"Our government is inviting companies from all over the world to Mexico because of the cheap cost of labor," said the brewery workers' leader, German Reglin. "These companies treat us like an orange from which you suck the juice and then throw it away. And our government is encouraging this by trampling on our constitutional rights. That's why support from the U.S. is so important to us."

Letters pledging to boycott Corona and Modelo beer can be sent to the union at Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Cerveceria Modelo, Calle Tonantzin Num. 33, Col. Anahuac, Mexico, D.F., 11320, Mexico. The letters of support will be presented to Corona Modelo management.

—Matt Witt

ILWU leader Harry Bridges (1901-1990)

Some 1,200 Hawaii dock workers joined International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union (ILWU) members on the U.S. and Canadian West Coast in leaving their jobs at noon March 30 to honor a labor leader whom a U.S. senator once called "the unseen Communist dictator of the Territory [of Hawaii]." The emphysema death of 88-year-old Harry Bridges made front-page news in the Islands, which were transformed forever by his militant leadership of the ILWU from 1937 to 1977.

Bridges was prominent for his brand of politicized trade unionism and resistance to McCarthyism but less known for the key role the Australian-born leftist played in changing Hawaii. The son of a well-to-do real-estate broker, Bridges disappointed his father by becoming a merchant seaman, sailing away from the Antipodes and organizing with the In-

dustrial Workers of the World in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1934, he led the San Francisco general strike.

After winning that fight, Bridges looked toward Hawaii, whose shipping links with the West Coast made the Islands a natural and fertile ground for union organizing. Bridges went to Hawaii in 1935 to organize stevedores and appointed Jack Hall, a Communist Party member at the time, regional ILWU director. The struggle was sharp. During the 1938 Hilo Massacre, 50 Big Island union supporters were shot down by police during a demonstration.

The ILWU's organizing strategy cut across Hawaii's many ethnic lines and united workers along industrial lines. Although World War II's martial law slowed organizing after Pearl Harbor, the multiracial union, which had spread from the piers to the plantations, staged successful strikes in the sugar and pineapple industries in 1946 and 1947.

The strike wave culminated in 1949 with the six-month-long dockers' walkout. In these early commer-

cial aviation days, longshoremen controlled the movement of virtually all goods to and from the Islands. When the territorial government attempted to break the strike by passing a law to control the docks and unload boats, Bridges' men on the West Coast refused to work ships coming from or going to Hawaii. The ILWU won again.

At the height of the Cold War hysteria, Nebraska Republican Sen. Hugh Butler denounced "the well-known infiltration tactics of world Communism, [by] a relative handful of Moscow adherents in the Islands" who were turning Hawaii into the Red Menace's "central operations base and a strategic clearinghouse" against the U.S. But Bridges, Hall and the ILWU were so popular that they survived the McCarthy era's red-baiting and expulsion from the CIO.

Bridges' militant espousal of multiracial workers' solidarity is his lasting legacy to Hawaii, where thousands have a higher standard of living and more political power thanks to his union.

—E. Rampell

By Salim Muwakkil

CHICAGO

THE MEDIA OVERKILL OF RECENT WEEKS HAS revived the sagging political career of Rep. Gus Savage (D-IL) and heightened frictions between Americans of African and Jewish descent. The Democratic primary for Illinois' second congressional district was widely portrayed as

BLACKS & JEWS

a simple morality play and Savage as an irrational, race-baiting villain. Coverage of the five-term congressman was so biased that even some of his most ardent enemies were moved to lend him support.

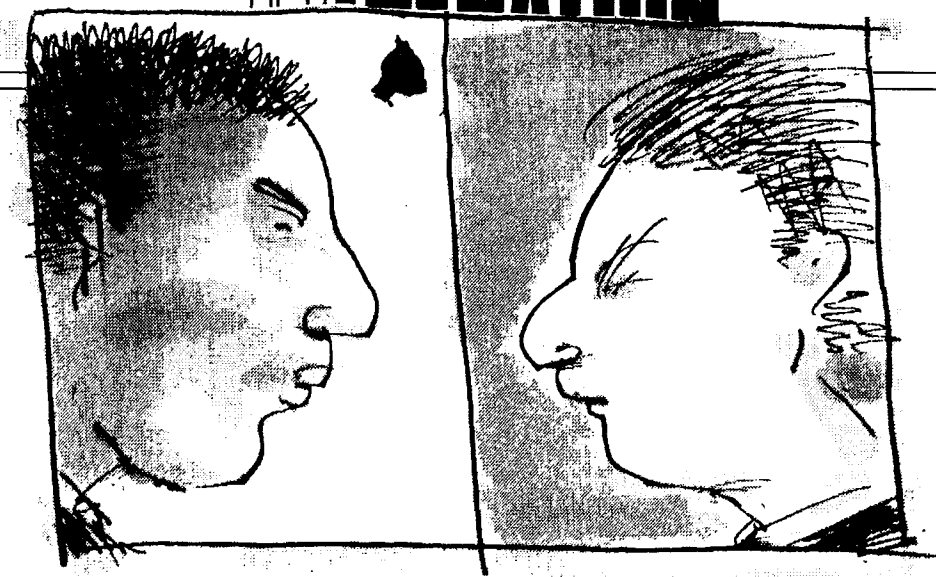
African-Americans have always been skeptical of media attacks on black leaders, and for good reason. Most heroes of black history have been objects of intense media animosity during their lifetimes, and in recent years those suspicions among blacks have grown. Displeasure with coverage of the black community has sparked major media boycotts by groups in Boston, New York, Chicago and several other cities across the country. A recent "black-media empowerment" rally in Chicago attracted a crowd that exceeded organizers' expectations by several hundred; signs reading "Leave Gus Alone" and "Boycott the [Chicago] *Sun-Times*" were ubiquitous.

"Thank God for the white media," quipped one of Savage's aides in an unguarded moment after the March 20 election. He knew, as did many other observers, that Savage's bombastic brand of politics had been losing favor with a growing number of his constituents. But the media's negative barrage ignited a movement spirit around the campaign; he must be doing something right, many activists eventually concluded.

Enter Robert Asher, former president of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Asher and his associates, several of whom are members of pro-Israeli groups connected to AIPAC, contributed 96 percent of the political action committee (PAC) funds collected by Mel Reynolds, Savage's primary opponent, according to election commission records. Savage repeatedly pointed out that most of Reynolds' campaign money came from sources outside of the community. Predictably, his constituents thought there was something odd about that.

The media chose to ignore the legitimacy of Savage's argument that Reynolds' campaign was being unduly influenced by outsiders. Instead, it interpreted the election result as an indication of increasing black anti-Semitism. "How could 'those people' vote for such a bigot as Gus Savage?" was repeatedly asked on radio talk shows across the country. Yet if more information had been provided concerning the issue of campaign funds, many Americans may have understood why Reynolds' challenge was rejected in the predominantly black district on Chicago's far South Side.

Communication gap: Many Jews are justifiably concerned that some black activists use criticism of Israel to disguise their anti-Jewish biases. Too often, however, no distinction is made between critics of Israel and anti-Semites. For example, when Nobel Peace laureate and South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu recently criticized Israel's treatment of Palestinians in the Oc-



Savage flap highlights increased racial tension

cupied Territories, some Jewish groups denounced him as an anti-Semite.

"I was not criticizing my opponent for receiving contributions from Jews or even pro-Israeli sources," Savage said at a post-election news conference. "I was criticizing that it accounted for 96 percent of his PAC money. Don't confuse AIPAC with the Jewish community. I'm not convinced AIPAC would have the support of the Jewish community."

Savage is being disingenuous. When speaking to black audiences, he occasionally lumps all Jews with AIPAC. Still, Savage's pre-electoral history as an activist-publisher contains no traces of anti-Jewish sentiments. He was then well known as one of Chicago's more principled progressives. In 1977, he managed Harold Washington's losing campaign. Since his initial election in 1980, Savage has been a strong pro-Palestinian voice in Congress, and he's a lifetime friend of Nation of Islam (NOI) leader Louis Farrakhan. For Asher and his associates—along with most of the media—these positions are both a threat to Israel and anti-Semitic. To many of his constituents, however, Savage is remaining true to his own beliefs and resisting outside pressure to dilute his message.

Whatever else it may do, the Savage flap demonstrates yet again that the communication gap between black and white—especially Jewish—America continues to grow. The gap is nothing new, of course. But in recent years, especially in Savage's hometown of Chicago, it has widened considerably. Thus, when addressing his constituents, Savage can connect the goals of an Israeli lobbying group with those of "Jewish newspapers" and "Jewish organizations" without bothering to delineate subtle—but necessary—distinctions. When chided by media watchdog groups for perpetuating stereotypes and ignoring Jewish sensitivities, Savage offhandedly countered that "Jews have historically ignored blacks' sensitivities." His refusal to acknowledge how each prejudice feeds upon the other perpetuated yet another cycle of accusations.

Dueling nationalisms: In his influential 1967 book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, historian Harold Cruse foreclosed all future alliances between blacks and Jews because Jewish Americans' commitment to Zionism—what he called "Jewish nationalism"—forever tainted relations between the two groups. Cruse wrote that since Israel's creation in 1948, "Negro-Jewish relations ... have

become colored by the incipient clash of two ideologies: black nationalism and Zionism."

Cruse dismissed distinctions between Jews and Zionists, however, and some of his proselytes wrongly concluded that Cruse believed all Jews were inherently antagonistic to the interests of black Americans. Ironically, Cruse was attempting to head off irrational anti-Jewish sentiments with his argument. "Much more important than developing a critique on Jews," he wrote, "is the challenge of learning the methods and techniques that the Zionists have developed in the art of survival against all kinds of odds."

At the time, most black organizers refused Cruse's challenge to study the Zionists' survival strategies, but many thought it important to develop a critique of Jewish influence on African-Americans. And, after all, that was what Cruse had done when he wrote in 1967 that, after Israel's founding, "it is no longer possible for Negro intellectuals to deal with the Jewish question in America purely on a basis of brotherhood, compassion, morality and other subjective responses which rule out objective criticism and positive appraisals."

Too many Jews: Cruse argued that Israel's founding further aggravated the differences between the two groups. The so-called alliance, he said, was an asymmetrical relationship in which Jews dominated the agenda of African-Americans, thus blocking the

African Americans and Jewish Americans must repair their troubled relationship.

growth of true black leadership and self-sufficiency. "There are far too many Jews from Jewish organizations into whose privy councils Negroes are not admitted," he wrote, "who nevertheless are involved in every civil rights and American-African organization, creating polity and otherwise analyzing the Negro from all possible angles."

Cruse's point was that black Americans could not progress until more of them moved "into control and guidance of every branch of the Negro movement," but many activists used his analysis to push their own petty bigotries. And although he cautioned against branding all Jews as culprits, Cruse bears some responsibility for the increasing anti-Jewish sentiment in the Black Power move-

ment.

Some black nationalist groups appropriated portions of Cruse's argument to justify their exotic, pseudo-Islamic theories that Jews are uniquely depraved. Many of their ideas echoed tenets found in classic anti-Jewish tracts, especially the kind of occult anti-Semitism so enduringly popular in Eastern Europe. And although these nationalist groups were—and remain—small in number and ideologically isolated, their mysterious hatreds resonated with Cruse's argument.

Neoconservative emergence: Of course, tensions between the two groups didn't start with the release of Cruse's book. Long-simmering grievances had occasionally ignited into protests: demonstrations in the '50s against Jewish merchants in Harlem, the purging of civil rights groups like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee from "Jewish domination" in the '60s. *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, however, gave these assorted grievances an intellectual coherence and framed them in a wider sociopolitical context.

Since those days, major differences over issues like affirmative action, U.S. policy toward the Middle East and Israeli cooperation with racist South Africa have further frayed relations between blacks and Jews. But perhaps more significantly, a number of Jewish intellectuals in the '70s developed a counterpart to Cruse's ideological reductionism: neoconservatism.

Utilizing logic as seductive—but equally myopic—as Cruse's, the neoconservatives continue bitterly to reject what they consider the naive "Third Worldism" of many African-Americans. If such views are widely accepted, they argue, Israel's existence would be imperiled. This is the core of their animus against such African-American leaders as Jesse Jackson. What's more, they are among the most persistent critics of Great Society liberalism, and they summarily reject the increasing demands of Black Power advocates.

The neoconservatives' cultural and political agenda arguably fulfills Cruse's prediction that many Jews would turn against the struggle for racial equality once they gained economic security as a group and achieved solid membership in America's success. But the reality is a bit more complex. As Seymour Martin Lipset pointed out on the March 9 *New York Times* op-ed page, "America's well-educated, affluent Jews, like their ancestors in Eastern Europe and their Soviet co-religionists, are full of foreboding. They wait to be struck down. They do not trust gentile neighbors and colleagues. They live under a permanent cloud."

Many black activists refuse to acknowledge this history-forged element of the Jewish-American psyche, and thus aid in the lack of communications. Cruse argued that by studying Jewish history, black Americans would learn valuable lessons and, like Jews, become more nationalistic.

Seeking identity: Yet Jewish organizations remain uneasy with expressions of black nationalism. According to Jonathan Kaufman, whose 1988 book *Broken Alliance* chronicles the growing tensions between the two peoples, "Jews, like most whites, failed to understand what it was like to be black in America. They underestimated the depths of discrimination and racism." Because of that misunderstanding, many Jewish-Ameri-

Continued on following page

Racial tension

Continued from preceding page
cans fail to appreciate African-Americans' desperate need to develop an identity based on their own cultural heritage.

When issues of black nationalism came to the fore during the '60s, significant numbers of Jewish activists left the civil-rights movement. Some went on to participate in other liberal causes, while others were attracted to the ideas of neoconservatism. Wrote Kaufman, "Jews who had hoped integration would usher in an era of free mixing and friendship with Negroes—Negroes who beneath their skin color were 'just like us'—could not fathom the celebration of black consciousness, black beauty, black art, black language that accompanied the growth of the Black Power movement. They were shaken by a change in attitude among black leaders."

Many Jews, still shaken by any expression of black nationalism, do not understand black nationalist concerns about eradicating the sense of self-hatred, lack of cultural identity and economic dependence that are among slavery's most enduring legacies. Yet these also are the ills most social scientists agree are major reasons for the expanding growth of the black underclass.

Despair and degradation are increasing in many black communities across the country, and the nationalism of such groups as the NOI speaks more to that condition than does any other U.S. institution. Savage, who has maintained his connection to the inner-city community where he was reared, understands that source of the NOI's appeal, and, like others who do community work in the inner cities, he has been impressed by the NOI's willingness to take on the tasks to which society has turned a deaf ear.

From his association with the NOI, Savage

has learned that a large part of the group's appeal is its ability to scandalize. For a powerless people, calling names is often a tonic. Thus Savage, like Farrakhan, purposely shades his tirades in subtle anti-Semitic tones, even as he legitimately criticizes Israel.

Media as villain: "In many ways Jewish rejection of all forms of black nationalist expression set the stage for Farrakhan's growth," explained Peter Bailey, a Virginia-based educator and former aide to Malcolm X. "By refusing to recognize the legitimacy of nationalist thinking, Jews positioned themselves as enemies to black aspirations for self-determination. That made it much easier for religious demagogues like Farrakhan to cast them as enemies and get a big hand."

And as the one-sided media tirades on Savage continue, much of the black community grows increasingly unwilling to pay much

attention. One unnamed pundit in Washington, D.C., contended that if the city's current mayor and alleged crack smoker Marion Barry ran for re-election next month, he'd win because his opponent would be the media.

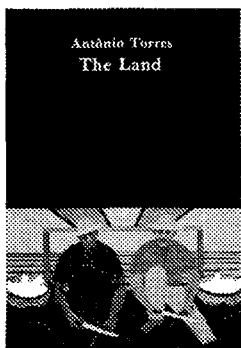
Obviously, the mainstream media is emerging as a major villain among black Americans. But since that same media provides most of the news, not much word gets out about that displeasure. Demagogues would blame everything on the "Jewish-owned" media and be correctly accused of trashing Jewish sensitivities about stereotypes. But that accusation would probably prevent discussion of the fact that, according to Kaufman's *Broken Alliance*, "Jews ... made up 25 to 30 percent of what author Charles Silberman correctly dubbed the 'media elite'—people working for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World Report* and the news divisions of NBC, CBS, ABC and public television."

That Jews are disproportionately represented in major news organizations is undeniable. Their influence may be diffuse and unorganized, but it is real and should be open to discussion if the two groups are interested in rapprochement. When ABC did an entire show last year on why African-Americans excel in certain athletic events, it sparked a healthy debate on many facets of that phenomenon. Such debates illuminate shadowy issues and foster interethnic awareness.

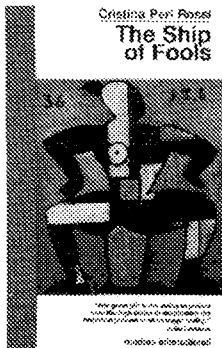
Clearly, the troubled relationship between African-Americans and Jewish-Americans must be repaired, and that healing must take place in an atmosphere of mutual sensitivity. Hopefully, that's not asking too much. □

Put the *accent* in América.

**2 Latin American books...today's greatest writers...FREE...
when you subscribe to READERS INTERNATIONAL's annual series of
the Best in world literature.**



The Land (025)
by Antônio
Torres, **Brazil**
'Tears at you
like an early
Buñuel movie'
The Observer
'Lyrically
haunting'
Punch



The Ship of Fools (054)
by Cristina
Peri Rossi,
Uruguay
'Zany humor
plus sexual
and political
insight' *Beryl
Bainbridge*



A Funny Dirty Little War (018)
by Osvaldo
Soriano,
Argentina
'Soriano's is a
style of brutal
efficiency'
John Updike in
The New Yorker

●**Fact:** Fewer than 1% of literary titles published each year in English come from outside the developed West. (Library of Congress)

●**Fact:** Some 70% of American authors write in Spanish or Portuguese.

●**Fact:** It took a subsidy to translate even Nobel laureate García Márquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* into English.

READERS INTERNATIONAL exists to help you read the world. With RI you explore new worlds of great writing.

There is no more vibrant writing in the world today than that from Latin America. RI's editors and worldwide network of advisors select the best of it. Then you the subscriber help bring these gifted writers of the Américas, and elsewhere, into English.

No more years of Solitude! Join RI and discover new works by many fine writers, from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East as well.

Forthcoming titles from the Américas include Antônio Torres' *Blues for a Lost Childhood*, which catches the jazzbeat of Brazil's seething cities; and best-seller Osvaldo Soriano's *Winter Quarters*, continuing his fierce, funny epic of Peronism in Argentina, the crucible of democracy in Latin America.

RI works like a magazine - subscribe for **only \$9.30** (+ p&p), and you'll get the next RI hardback selection, plus the Américas book of your choice, **FREE**.

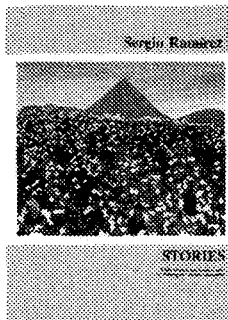
Or, subscribe for a year, as you would to a magazine. You'll get **six** bimonthly hardback selections, at extra savings, plus **TWO FREE** bonus books right away.

Put the Américas - and the world - in your library.

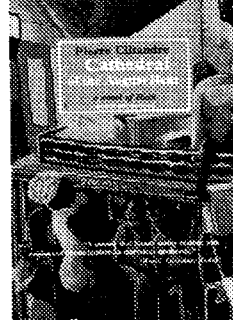
(Free books in paperback; all subscription volumes in hardcover editions.)



Mothers and Shadows (016)
by Marta Traba,
Colombia
'Remarkable
contribution to
new writing by
women in Latin
America'
Village Voice



Stories (029)
by Sergio
Ramírez,
Nicaragua
'Biting & satirical'
NY Times
'Fun to read,
difficult to forget'
London's
South



Cathedral of the August Heat (031)
by Pierre
Clitandre, **Haiti**
'Expresses the
collective consciousness
of Haiti's poorest'
NY Times Bk Rev

READERS INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box 959 Columbia LA 71418

Please begin my subscription to RI at the special \$9.30 subscriber price, + \$1.65 p&p. I'll get RI's newest title every other month at the same special price. I may cancel at any time.

Name _____
Address _____ Apt. no. _____
City _____ State/Prov. _____ ZIP/Postcode _____
LATAM

☐ \$10.95 (Can\$13.75) enclosed. My FREE book, no.

☐ Bill my ☐ VISA or ☐ MasterCard.

Card No. _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____

SPECIAL SAVINGS and two free books:

☐ \$55 (Can\$65) enclosed for an annual subscription. I get RI's six newest world titles, plus two FREE books:

(title numbers)

☐ Bill my credit card for \$55 (US currency only).

ITT 26

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE S

If applicable affix your mailing label here.

I AM:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

☐ **MOVING.**

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

If possible affix your mailing label to facilitate the change. If no label is available be sure to include both the new and OLD zip codes with the complete addresses. Please allow 4-6 weeks for the address change.

☐ **SUBSCRIBING.** Fill out your name and address above and we will have IN THESE TIMES with news and analysis you can't find anywhere else in your mailbox within 4-6 weeks. Check price and term below. **ASTNO**

☐ **RENEWING.** Do it now and keep IN THESE TIMES coming without interruption. Affix your mailing label above and we will renew your account to automatically extend when your current subscription expires. Check price and term below. **ARSTO**

☐ **SHOPPING.** Give an IN THESE TIMES gift subscription. It makes a perfect gift for friends, relatives, students or associates. Fill out your name and address above and name and address of recipient below. A handsome gift card will be sent. **XSTHO**

NAME OF RECIPIENT _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PRICE / TERM

- ☐ One year: \$34.95
- ☐ Six months: \$18.95
- ☐ Student/retired, One year: \$24.95
- ☐ Institutional, One year: \$59.00
- ☐ Payment enclosed
- ☐ Bill me later
- ☐ Charge my VISA/MC

ACCT. NO. _____

EXP. DATE _____

Above prices for U.S. residents only. Foreign orders add \$33 per year. Canadian and Mexican orders add \$13 per year.

In These Times Customer Service
1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054
1-800-435-0715; in Illinois 1-800-892-0753

By Paul Hockenos

EAST BERLIN

AS OLD FILE CABINETS ARE OPENED AND long-mute officials speak up, the state secrets emerging from the Pandora's box of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) are shocking to even the government's harshest critics.

The latest environmental data released here reveals an ecological disaster that is nightmarish even by Eastern European standards: 44 percent of the nation's forests are damaged; only 3 percent of river water is drinkable; 10 percent of tap water doesn't

ENERGY

meet safety regulations; atmospheric emissions are four times greater than in the Federal Republic (FRG); and sulfur dioxide levels are 30 percent higher than in Czechoslovakia, three times higher than in Poland and eight times higher than in the FRG.

Even more chilling are the recent disclosures concerning the East's dilapidated nuclear-power industry. Since 1974, several full-scale meltdowns have been narrowly averted at outmoded reactors still in operation today. Had the catastrophes materialized, huge areas of northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Poland would have suffered the effects of radioactive fallout.

Emergency visits by top East and West experts to the Baltic's Lubmin plant, 10 miles from the coastal city of Greifswald, found anachronistic technology, crumbling reactor towers and faulty backup systems. From evacuation plans to waste disposal, the plant's standards fall far below safety guidelines. The '60s Soviet models, also built in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, lack even primitive containment mechanisms that could prevent small-scale core accidents from sparking a Chernobyl-style meltdown. As a result of the investigating team's report, two of the six towers were closed down.

The Lubmin plant has been plagued by close calls since its first days of operation, prompting Greifswald workers to nickname the facility "Chernobyl North." In 1988 alone, 242 "unplanned incidents," 122 malfunctions and 18 shutdowns occurred.

Small miracles and a ticking time bomb: Two accidents in particular have provoked an anti-nuclear outcry in the Northern European community. A Lubmin engineer told the West German weekly *Der Spiegel* that it was "a miracle" that a 1976 fire in one of the towers didn't result in a nuclear catastrophe. The blaze cut through the cable connecting the six diesel-operated cooling pumps and the electrical backup systems to the reactor center.

"Nobody knew what to do," added the engineer. "Would it come to a meltdown or not? The time bomb was ticking." Only when one of the six backup pumps kicked in was a disaster averted. Under strict security measures—including secret-police supervisions—the damaged facilities were cleaned, repaired and operating again within four months.

Twelve years later, on Nov. 24, 1989—the same day the Communist Party relinquished its "leading role" in Berlin—the second near-disaster threatened at Lubmin. In the new Tower 5, during a test of the emergency safety system, three of the six main cooling pumps were inadvertently switched off. Instead of the expected core shutdown, an additional pump failed and the reactor began to spin out of control. Before technicians managed to manually stop the core func-

tions, one-third of the fissionable material had been damaged—a virtual local meltdown. According to on-site workers, large amounts of radiation escaped.

While pressurized water reactors are more sophisticated than the graphite-cooled systems of Chernobyl, according to Lutz Mez, a senior researcher at the West Berlin Institute of Energy and Environmental Policy, they are no less hazardous. "There are grave construction errors in these models," says Mez, who has worked closely with GDR nuclear experts for years. "Once a meltdown passes a certain stage, there are no mechanisms ... to interrupt it or contain it. All of the towers are so interconnected that if one goes, the others would go too."

In a serious accident at the Lubmin water reactors, adds Mez, "nearly all the radioactive material would be released." By comparison, only 4 percent of the radioactive contents escaped at Chernobyl.

Nuclear power, which currently produces 10 percent of the nation's electricity, was central to the old regime's long-term energy program. Following the oil crisis of the '70s, the Soviet Union froze oil shipments to Eastern Europe, forcing the GDR to use its own ingenuity and resources to supply its energy needs. But choices were limited to soft brown coal—abundant in the South—and Soviet-bought nuclear reactors.

Four more towers were added to the Baltic plant, and a megareactor complex, 10 times the size of Lubmin, near Magdeburg, was to function as the country's energy hub. But international prices skyrocketed and, de-

spite massive compensation investment, only two of the new Lubmin reactors are operational. Fourteen years later, progress on the Stendal station inches along with no end in sight.

After Chernobyl, the government raised some of its safety standards but by 1986 was too involved in ongoing projects to fully re-evaluate its energy policy. Under the Bureau of Atomic Safety, run by secret-police chief Erich Mielke's son-in-law, the industry's regulatory policy was carried out in accordance with the hermetic logic of the security state. Plans were kept top secret, accidents covered up, debate suppressed and decision-making confined to the elite bureaucracy. Critical environmental groups were banished to the cellars of churches.

Since 1974, several full-scale meltdowns have been narrowly averted at outmoded reactors still in operation today.

"The GDR functioned as a surveillance state not only in the social sphere but also in all fields of scientific research, especially that of atomic energy," says Volker Kühn, a veteran opposition activist and spokesman for the East-Green Party. Research positions were restricted to party members, and the

limited information that made its way to the West was often falsified. Nuclear-plant employees from top technicians to custodians were paid double the average wages. "In this way," adds Kühn, "they simply bought the peoples' silence."

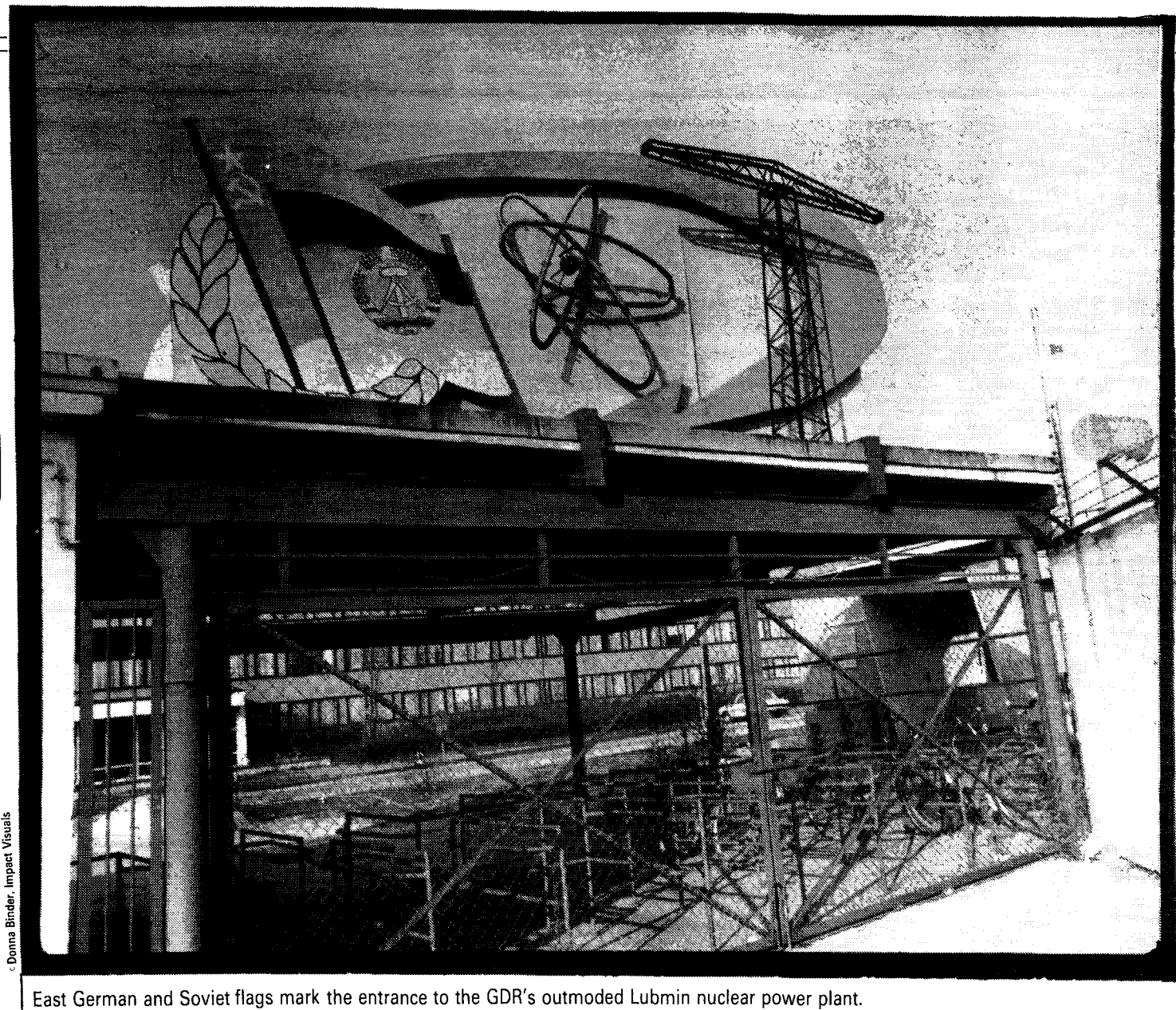
Since news of the coverups broke, East and West ecological groups have called for the immediate shutdown of the entire Lubmin station and for closure of the smaller Rheinsburg site, the country's only other functional nuclear plant. But despite the acknowledged dangers, as well as government reports citing modernization as economically "not effective," the stations remain open.

A lump of coal: The chief obstacle to shutting down the reactor is the country's lopsided dependence on highly sulfuric brown coal, which supplies 70 percent of the GDR's electricity and is the main contributor to the nation's highly polluted environment. A strong anti-coal lobby insists that the relatively clean nuclear option is preferable to the immediate health hazards posed by brown coal. With the Soviet Union already cutting back its oil shipments to Eastern Europe, activists are hard-pressed for a short-term solution.

The GDR has the third-highest per capita energy-usage level in the world. And, while ecological demands were at the forefront of last fall's pro-democracy movement, East Germans are reluctant to jeopardize their exorbitant consumption levels.

Energy conservation was never pushed in Eastern Europe as it was in the West after the oil crisis. The inefficient, old Kombinate—the industrial pillar of the GDR's centralized economy—was geared solely toward set production quotas and thus consumes tremendous amounts of fuel. With two-thirds of all heating costs subsidized by the government, homes, libraries and offices are heated at temperatures that most Westerners would

Continued on following page



East German and Soviet flags mark the entrance to the GDR's outmoded Lubmin nuclear power plant.

East Germany opens its nuclear Pandora's box

By William K. Burke

THE CHOICES FACING EASTERN EUROPE'S NEW governments frighten Conrad Von Moltke, founder of the Institute for European Environmental Policy. "I'm terrified of the fact that people are going to advise those nations to get their economies going first and then worry about the environment. That's terrible, because you get a lousy economy and a lousy environment," he said.

Environmentalists already call Eastern Europe's countries the dirtiest in the world. These nations built their economies by burning state-subsidized coal in poorly designed power plants and furnaces. Their environmental ministries have had no power to challenge or regulate the states' strict plans for increasing production of steel, chemicals and other products at all costs.

But today, as Eastern European economies collapse, the real costs of ignoring environmental protection are increasingly evident. Longtime bans on publishing the truth about pollution have been lifted, and ecological horror stories are pouring out of the former Soviet bloc. The average lifespan of Polish and Czechoslovakian men is declining as cancer and respiratory illness rates explode in polluted regions. Huge stands of trees are dying in the coal-rich region where East Ger-

Pollution politics and environmental neglect

many, Poland and Czechoslovakia intersect. Poland's great rivers are so polluted that some factories must treat water before using it to prevent it from eating through metal pipes.

EAST BLOC

As Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria adopt free-market economic policies, environmentalists fear that they will also acquire the problems of the West, where business lobbies often block effective environmental legislation. There is speculation that open borders and Western aid will thwart Eastern Europe's environmentalists. But the green parties and the grass-roots ecology groups sprouting throughout the region suggest another possibility—the emerging governments could set new world standards for citizen participation and the integration of economics and ecology.

"Many environmentalists hope that East-

ern Europe might come up with a middle path between Western and Eastern environmental problems," said Alex Hittle, international coordinator for the Washington, D.C.-based Friends of the Earth. "It's a chance to develop a sort of dream region. That may be hopeless idealism, but a lot of things that people thought were hopeless idealism for Eastern Europe seem to be coming true."

Wasting away Poland: Poland's saga illustrates the background of Eastern Europe's environmental crisis. After the devastation of World War II, the Polish people rebuilt their country using Soviet leader Joseph Stalin's system of providing state coal and timber subsidies to insure rapid growth. That rebuilding, however, took its toll.

In the early '70s, a group of experts in various disciplines prepared an environmental analysis for the Polish government. The analysis found that during the post-war boom Poland had produced more land, air and water pollution than goods and services. To counter this the researchers recom-

mended that Poland switch its economic emphasis to soft industries like textiles and tourism. The government, however, ignored the researchers' recommendations and continued expanding heavy industry and construction. More dirty brown coal was burned, pumping into the air ash and sulfur dioxide that in turn caused acid rain. More sewage and toxic waste was dumped into the nation's rivers, and Poland's forest preserves were cut down faster than they could be replanted.

"It was all propaganda," said economist Zbigniew Bochniarz, who helped work on the analysis. "We treated very seriously our research and all these [reports]. But the government misused us, you know. They used us only for propaganda purposes.... The government declared a sort of environmental policy, but it was just a declaration. In reality it was not implemented. The industrial and military lobbies were so strong they did not allow [the environmental program] to be carried out. They wasted all the resources."

The Stalinist economic scheme then common to Eastern Europe in a sense encouraged pollution by rewarding managers for meeting or exceeding input and output goals. They received bonuses for burning more brown coal despite a waste factor of as much as 50 percent of their energy production.

East Germany

Continued from preceding page

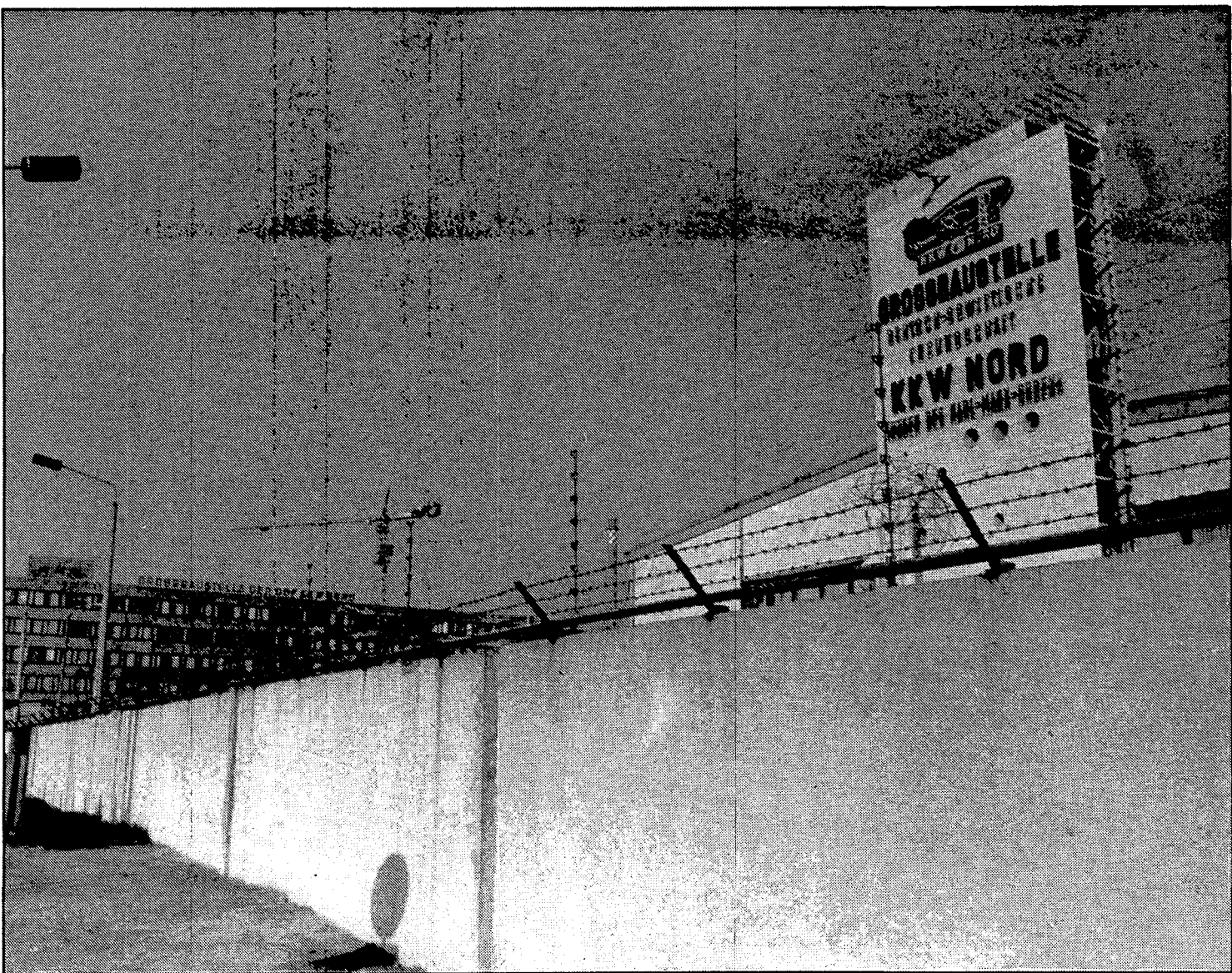
find unbearable. Apartment buildings lack even the most basic insulation. Coal deliveries are routinely dumped on sidewalks regardless of weather.

Parts of the northern Mecklenburg coast rely almost exclusively on the nuclear stations for power. In Greifswald, 4,000 Lumbin workers and their families took to the streets in February protesting the partial shutdown of the plant as well as the fate of 15,000 flats that would subsequently go without heat. The demonstrators demanded the resignation of the New Forum energy minister and the reinstatement of former party leaders.

Desperately seeking alternatives: With the energy industry lying in ruin, environmentalists saw an historic chance to institute a progressive policy before the recent elections. Rather than upgrade the nuclear and brown-coal plants at enormous cost, the East and West Greens, New Forum and Democracy Now advocate the use of alternative power sources, which the energy monopolies have shut out of the Western European market. Danish-made windmills, for example, could supply as much electricity as the Stendal station in 10 years time. Solar power is another longer-term option.

Conservation and socially oriented planning must be at the heart of any future policy, the activists argue. The question of where we will get energy is falsely put, says physicist and New Forum energy adviser Sebastian Pflugbeil. "Who needs how much energy and for what purposes? Are those purposes worthwhile? How can we save energy? Those are the important questions," he adds.

Pflugbeil, former energy minister of the transition government, views the GDR's unique position as a critical opportunity for all of Europe. "When the West conglomerates manage to contract atomic energy plants in the GDR, then the chances elsewhere—in the FRG, in Denmark, in France—for an alternative energy policy are dead," says Pflugbeil. "We have the chance to serve as a model."



Known as "Chernobyl North," the Lubmin plant hums ominously along in the center of Europe.

The environmentalists, however, recognize that interim needs must be met, and that demands assistance from the very monopolies whose stranglehold they want to circumvent. In order to tide the country over, electricity, hard coal, technology and natural gas must be imported from border points.

The West German "energy mafia" already has penetrated the GDR market and, with the conservatives' victory at the polls, will have free rein in the East. The multinational

conglomerate Siemens and its nuclear subsidiary have begun negotiations for the industry's modernization and plan to construct their own reactors at Stendal.

The big energy lobbies see the East as easy prey, says Kühn. "Not only is there a lot of support for atomic energy here but the FRG firms hope to avoid the much more organized anti-nuke movement that exists in the West. We're going to have to work very quickly here."

The left's exclusion from the newly elected

conservative government makes passage of an alternative energy policy in the East highly unlikely. If all goes according to the victorious Christian Democrats' plans, the Kombinate directors will be wearing Siemens ties, the state's former secrets will become public knowledge and private property, and the decrepit reactors on the Baltic coast will hum ominously along in the center of Europe. □

Paul Hockenos is an *In These Times* correspondent in Eastern Europe.

Although strict environmental-protection laws were passed in the early '70s, few pollution controls were installed in the East bloc's state-owned factories. Instead, managers calculated the amount of pollution fines they expected to pay and included them in their budget proposals. The managers received the money to pay the fines from industrial ministries and then passed it on to environment ministries.

By the time Poland's economy crashed in the late '80s, the country's natural environment was severely polluted. Acid rain had eaten away the faces of medieval statues in Krakow. The village of Wroblin was so polluted by a copper smelter that the government's only choice was to relocate the villagers and bulldoze their homes. Vegetables grown near the Katowice steel plant have registered levels of toxic heavy metals at 70 percent above health standards set by the World Health Organization.

A small breakthrough came last February when the Communist government and the opposition trade union Solidarity gathered in Warsaw to plan Poland's future. One product of their discussions, the remarkable yet uninspiringly titled *Report of the Round Table Sub-unit on Ecology*, details a plan for Poland's ecological rebirth. It contains specific proposals for reforming everything from industrial practices to elementary education. It's an impressive blueprint but, according to Andrzej Kassenberg, vice president of the Polish Ecological Club, it has since been only partly followed because of limited funding, entrenched bureaucracy and foreign monetary pressures.

Interestingly, the round table's call for environmental conservation is starting to be met by the terms of an agreement between Poland's new Solidarity-led government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). To qualify for an IMF loan, the Solidarity government was forced to implement an economic austerity program that ended subsidies for the cost of energy. Since January 1 the cost of coal in Poland has risen more than 400 percent, forcing residents to conserve.

Bochniarz said the increase in the cost of coal will ultimately reduce Poland's pollution. He also called the move an important step toward a sustainable society, even though the Polish people will likely face an energy crisis similar to the one U.S. citizens faced in the early '70s. Hittle, however, pointed out that from 1973 to 1983 the U.S. economy grew 40 percent without increasing energy use, although Americans remain notorious for wasting energy.

In addition to guiding their country toward a rational energy policy, the Solidarity government has put several other ecology round-table reforms in place. The government has placed the management of Poland's national forests under the Ministry of the Environment, created a commission to reform the country's environmental rules and regulations, allowed the Polish environmental inspection service to publish a digest of statistics documenting Poland's pollution problems and passed a law banning the lucrative import of toxic waste from Western European industries.

That's an impressive list for a young government facing long-term economic hardship. Poland has already closed several factories that were among the worst polluters, and officials have ended political persecution of environmentalists.

Unfortunately, though, most of the round-table recommendations remain ideas on paper. The Ministry of Transport has done

nothing to encourage the use of lead-free gasoline. Toxic waste from Western industries continues to stream over the border, marked, according to Kassenberg, simply as "second-hand materials." And Poland continues to add more than 80 million tons of toxic waste a year to the 1.6 billion tons of untreated industrial waste already polluting the Polish countryside. A proposal to use pollution fines as a national fund for environmental protection that would provide credit and finances for "pro-ecological activities" was scrapped last summer when the IMF and World Bank prevented the Polish government from creating any new special funds.

Looking to the West: Now Poland's agricultural bureaucrats have reached out to the West for assistance that could further damage their environment. When the Polish Ministry of Agriculture presented its requests for foreign aid last fall, the list included 15 pesticides considered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to be dangerous to groundwater. The sandy Polish soil provides little obstacle to such chemicals, and Polish farmers—many of whom still rely on horses to farm small plots of ground—are not likely to question the possible ill effects of the newest wonders from the West.

Ironically, a growing number of U.S. farmers are turning away from the chemically dependent agriculture that has supported the American economy since World War II. As cancer rates among farmers increase and as ground and surface water pollution become evident, many U.S. farmers are switching to a system of integrated pest management, by using non-toxic biological pesticides, scouting fields and rotating crops in order to minimize the need for chemical pesticides.

The chemical-based farming methods the U.S. is offering Poland are effective but addictive. While one poison wipes out a certain type of pest, it may also kill natural insect predators. This often allows other minor pests to breed freely and eventually become major problems. Farmers must then invest in costly new pesticides, and the cycle begins again.

While this chemical treadmill increases crop production, it also increases the percentage of crops lost to insects. Thousands of farmers go bankrupt as their costs of production go up and the market value of their goods goes down. Britain's *Economist* has predicted that at least a third of Poland's 2.3 million farms will vanish in the switch to private markets and Western farming methods. Bill Barclay, who studies the international pesticide trade for Greenpeace, lamented what he considered a shortsighted policy. "It's such a great opportunity to promote alternative agriculture, rather than recreating our experience with all of its problems."

The Fund for the Development of Polish Agriculture (FDPA)—which, according to Barclay, is partially funded by the pesticide manufacturers Eli Lilly, Monsanto and ICI—is arranging the pesticide shipments from the U.S. Although the FDPA's recent report on Polish agriculture mentions the need to train Polish farmers to spray pesticides to avoid contaminating food, it does not suggest that the Poles explore integrated pest-management strategies.

"You can't trust a pesticide company to implement a true integrated pest-management strategy; it's not in their financial self-interest," Barclay said.

Kassenberg and Bochniarz have long argued that Poland cannot prosper without an

ecological rebirth—a popular position back in the '80s when Solidarity opposed the Communist government's Stalinist economic policies. But now that Solidarity is in power, vested interests and foreign influence are pushing the new government toward an environmental policy similar to that of the U.S. Poland will, however, have a slightly strengthened environmental-protection ministry mediating between a growing citizens' ecology movement and burgeoning private businesses. Still, such a policy will at best only slow down, not reverse, Poland's environmental degradation.

From brown to green? While Poland's steady march toward freedom demonstrated the economic and environmental fores at work throughout Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia's sudden liberation dramatizes how

Environmentalists already call Eastern Europe's countries the dirtiest in the world. These nations built their economies by burning state-subsidized coal in poorly designed power plants and furnaces.

a battle between hope and despair for people's hearts may hold the key to the region's ecological future. Less than a week after Czechoslovakia's Communist government fell last November, the Vienna office of Greenpeace had already received more than 60,000 information requests from Czechoslovakians. Long aware that their government was destroying their nation's natural systems, Czechoslovakians referred to the bonuses workers received for working 10 years in polluted North Bohemia as "burial money."

But, as in the rest of Eastern Europe, it was a crime against the state to question the government's environmental policies. As a result, most Czechs had no source of hard data about pollution or alternative development strategies. There were few complaints when the old government announced a long-term plan to replace its brown-coal-burning electric power plants with nuclear reactors and huge hydroelectric dams. The silence finally broke last December when the Czechoslovakian border opened and Greenpeace's rainbow-striped campaign bus rolled into the country.

During the country's first weeks of freedom, thousands of Czechs sported stickers that read, "Better active today than radioactive tomorrow." During that time, Greenpeace dropped two bombs on the Czech nuclear industry. First, in December the environmental group revealed that in 1983 the government had concealed a study showing that Temelin, Czechoslovakia's main nuclear-power project, was being built in an area prone to earthquakes along a river that did not contain enough water to cool the four planned reactors. The government had found the study "technically correct but politically unacceptable." In January, however, the Czechoslovakian government announced its intentions to cancel two of the Temelin reactors and stop construction on the others until after the June elections.

In Late January Greenpeace, in another

series of press conferences across Czechoslovakia, presented evidence that from 1965 to 1985 the Mape uranium-processing plant in South Bohemia poured its radioactive waste directly into a nearby river. According to Greenpeace, 80 percent of the animals at some farms near the plant suffered from leukemia and mutations.

But Greenpeace campaigner Wolfgang Peckny said these sudden revelations seem to have caused only a quiet shift in public opinion. "At first it was really euphoric, and now two months later it's some sort of resignation. They say we shouldn't drink our water and our soil is poisoned. We need energy, but the nuclear power, they tell us, is bad. They tell us everything is bad. It's so hard to know what to do." Peckny said.

There is little support for continuing the old government's environmental policies, said Václav Klinkera, who is setting up a Prague headquarters for Czechoslovakia's various regional green movements. But, he added, there is a split in the new government between those who believe that economic growth must be emphasized and those who feel environmental reform must precede renewed growth.

In defense of nature: Green political parties may be the best hope for translating the euphoria of political freedom into the direct action the polluted countries of Eastern Europe need so badly. In Bulgaria, Stalinist dictator Todor Zhivkov fell less than a month after about two dozen members of the environmental group Ekoglastnost staged their country's first anti-government demonstration in 35 years.

Philip Dimitrov, the vice deputy of the new Bulgarian Green Party, said that his party will press for democracy and a free-market economy. He said he believes Bulgaria can build an ecological democracy by using a new tax structure to reward companies that protect nature. But Dimitrov said that first his nation's new freedom of thought must allow his people to restore the bond with nature that is the key to a sustainable society.

"A person who can live in a clean country, who can feel nature, will not be only pragmatic. A person who is concerned that 'we should be first, we should be right, we should be the only ideology that is accepted,' must sacrifice his deeper feelings, and nature is one of the greatest sacrifices," Dimitrov said.

Caught between a Communist past that has left their countries polluted and a free-market future that promises wealth yet threatens them with environmental compromises their natural systems cannot withstand, Eastern Europe's environmentalists are showing a courageous optimism that the West will need to emulate.

Global warming, toxic waste, the ozone hole and other looming environmental disasters prompted environmental groups to warn that the '90s are the last chance for societies to choose sustainable development policies. Otherwise, environmental scientists warn, nature's ability to support humanity will eventually collapse. As people around the world try to meet that challenge, they should remember the following words, published by the few dozen Bulgarians who set forth last October to face the boots and nightsticks of their secret police, with no assurance that anything awaits them except pain and prison: "Governments come and go, even states are not eternal, but humanity must have guarantees that it will survive." □

William K. Burke writes regularly for *In These Times* on environmental issues.

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 11-17, 1990 11

A real education

in the New York City school system

By Rob Polner

"We're a nation of fucks and gangsters because that's what we glorify in Americana, and aside from that culturally, aside from that, everybody cheats. Not some people—95 percent of the people. Some cheat a little. Some cheat a lot. You work in an office, you take home supplies. People work at a construction site, they take home, uh, two-by-fours. Unfortunately, we've become a nation of petty crooks . . . a nation of thieves, morally and everything."

—New York City school official Jimmy Sullivan,
October 1989

The scene was a semi-fancy French restaurant in Rego Park, N.Y. Jimmy Sullivan, no known occupation, loosened his collar and swigged his drink. He was doing his best I'm-a-big-man bit, cynically bemoaning the state of the world in thick *new yawk-ese*.

"We're debased, you know," he said.

Sullivan, at the time a member of the Queens District 27 School Board, had pressing things on his mind. He had with him his closest political ally—a teacher—and the district superintendent, Coleman Genn. Although the local board was responsible for 29,000 students and 32 elementary and junior high schools, Sullivan never mentioned education.

What obsessed him was jobs for his "people"—white political pals and election workers, tied in with his clubhouse. He and his teacher friend were there to persuade the board-appointed superintendent to pad the school payroll.

Ah, education, New York City-style. It's exactly what new schools Chancellor Joseph Fernandez is trying to change.

It has been 21 years since New York City's elementary and junior high schools were carved into 31—and later 32—amorphous school districts.

Decentralization was a response to community cries for local empowerment and to searing attacks on the largely white unions and central-board authorities with their faces pressed up against their own agendas.

Unfortunately, characters like Jimmy Sullivan—who was indicted last year by the Queens district attorney's office for trying to turn his district into a patronage mill—have prospered and multiplied. It's almost as if school decentralization were designed especially for them. The common tabloid term for the city school system is "scandal-scarred," which is pretty much on target. Three-quarters of the city's school boards are under investigation. Half are thought to be corrupt or seriously mismanaged.

With organized interests meddling in all of the local boards; with the central bureaucracy lost in a forest of 1,000 schools, 940,000 students and a \$6 billion budget; and with rules that make it a cinch to suspend a student but nearly impossible to dislodge an inept teacher or principal, the nation's largest school system is forsaking another generation of poor children and alienating middle-class families. The system's No. 2 man, Stanley Litow, was embarrassed when word slipped out that he sends his 14-year-old daughter to a private school. But who, really, could blame him for shielding his child from the city's chaotic public schools?

Those who can't afford private education face the sometimes tragic consequences of being "educated" by an ineffective, stagnant system at a time when their dangerous and crack-plagued neighborhoods are ill-served by society in general.

There also has been a well-documented continental shift during the students' lives—a shift away from a mainly manufacturing economy, whose workers could expect decent paychecks with relatively little education. Now most workers must either make their way into the white-collar and highly

specialized world that requires plenty of credentials or settle for often low-paying service jobs.

Considering the high cost of living, there is no question that a decent-paying job—a decent future—requires a college degree or a high level of vocational training in high school.

School decentralization was supposed to help children of poverty beat the odds and get a jump-start on life. That doesn't happen nearly enough, and the system's newest savior, Chancellor Fernandez, is pushing top-to-bottom changes that he claims will clean up the system and yet allow it to remain true to the democratic spirit of decentralization. No one knows if he'll succeed, but virtually everyone in the city's education community is fed up with the present state of affairs and willing to follow this brash leader into largely uncharted territory.

He's not starting from zero, however. Reading scores have climbed slightly, although 51 percent of the students can't read at or above their grade level. It's true, too, that school districts are more ethnically integrated than they were under the centralized system. Despite corruption, local districts also have been more calm politically than they were in the mid to late '60s, allowing the more adventurous educators at the community level to improve schools.

Still, most districts continue to perform poorly, notably those with poor, minority and non-English-speaking students. Low reading scores are just one sign. Another is the high dropout rate. The official figure is 30 percent, but some estimate that it's as high as 50 percent. Dropout-prevention programs that take finesse, like outreach to parents of elementary students with low attendance, don't materialize often enough to make a difference. Is that any surprise, what with the kind of political shenanigans that go on in the local districts?

For example, a showdown seems imminent in what once was a relatively stable South Bronx district, because Board President Marion Rose is angry that the district superintendent blocked the hiring of her two daughters and niece as teachers' aides. The three young women, according to Superintendent Carmen Rodriguez, failed the ninth-grade-level civil service-type exam for the job. Rose, however, says that's impossible.

Rose is a determined former neighborhood political boss. Rodriguez is a widely respected superintendent who has held the job since the '70s in one of the city's poorest communities.

Their battle amounts to a tug of war between professional power and community control—the decentralization fight of the '60s all over again. Rose and her board majority want to eliminate the hiring exam as well as Rodriguez. That way, the board can control a potentially rich source of political power—school employment.

Rose freely admits this and, despite stormy opposition from parents at board meetings, considers herself "a woman of the people." A veteran of the decentralization struggle, she says flatly, "We won the right to hire our people. That's what decentralization is all about."

It hardly matters to her that the test she wants to eliminate is designed to ensure that school employees meet minimal educational requirements—and have qualifications that go beyond their connections to local board members and politicians.

Nor did it matter to Jimmy Sullivan—who before his indictment controlled the majority of votes on his Queens school board. Superintendent Genn knew he would lose



Fifth-graders in New York's "scandal-scarred" public schools

his contract if he didn't "play ball" with the self-anointed powerbroker, so he decided to take a significant personal risk. He volunteered to wear a hidden microphone for an independent commission investigating school corruption.

There was no telling how far Sullivan would have gone in setting up his fiefdom. The local board controlled a \$100 million annual budget for a school district larger than that of many medium-sized cities.

Sullivan and his cronies didn't count on Genn acting according to deeply held principles of right and wrong. They also underestimated his political savvy, which came from 20 years of working in and around "the system."

In the early days of decentralization, the first wave of local boards and superintendents invigorated the school system with innovations from East Harlem to the Bronx. But then, this period was marked by intense involvement and community leaders. Special-interest groups, including churches, unions and political clubs, hadn't yet won control of the local boards. The shift was not difficult, however, after parent participation began to wane.

To this day, school board members are elected in May with paper ballots and with a confusing weighted voting system that caters to organized slates of candidates. Voter turnout has never been high. Last May it hit an all-time low: less than 7 percent of eligible voters went to the poorly supervised polling sites.

But the failures of decentralization aren't just the fault of a screwy voting process, complacency among parents or the rise of interest groups. The state decentralization law, borne of exhaustion and compromise, was vague and riddled with loopholes.

Then the city's fiscal crisis of the early '70s bled schools that were already short on space and after-school programs. The citywide poverty mentality that set in compounded the difficulty of educating a vast population of economically disadvantaged and transient students.

What's more, as a report by the 93-year-old Public Edu-



Cindy Reiman, Impact Visuals

When education becomes a political game, the students are the biggest losers.

cation Association points out, the central bureaucracy never changed its ways. "As far as the central authorities were concerned, the day after decentralization was in most respects identical to the day before," the 1987 report said.

The central board is supposed to service the local districts with supplies, support personnel and monitoring efforts. It has failed miserably, since—according to the report—it remains "more concerned with developing its own agenda than facilitating local priorities."

So, it's spring. After a winter of scandal, the air is pregnant with change and renewed hope. But this time the cries for reform aren't arising from the street.

They are voiced by the men and women at the top of the central board. Fernandez has hired some of the most vocal critics of the school system as his closest aides to help him challenge the old status quo.

"It's a kind of a three-step dance."

—Columbia Teachers College professor Dale Mann, who has studied decentralization, quoted in the New York Times

There's no comparing the New York City reforms just getting underway with those in the Chicago school system.

In one fell swoop, Chicago's troubled central board was superseded by a parent-dominated school board in every school. That's not a dance but a headlong leap into undiluted participatory democracy.

After two difficult decades of decentralization in New York, the people at the top have had it with grass-roots politics—and are unwilling to give parents and local boards more power.

The first step of the New York dance, in fact, entails Fernandez' exerting more, not less, citywide authority. He wants to strengthen his hand over the selection of school administrators. He is also focusing the central board's monitoring and service-providing roles on the schools themselves rather than on the districts, to which parents have little relationship.

The second dance step: Fernandez wants to consign the school boards to educational and budgetary matters—and get the state legislature's approval to strip them of their hiring and appointment powers.

The last step is the biggest. Fernandez will seek to persuade as many principals as possible to share school decision-making power with school-based panels of teachers and, where possible, parents.

Many principals, of course, already consult teachers and parents on an informal basis. Fernandez wants to institutionalize the process under the heading of school-based management. Whether it works or not is an open question, but the attempt is a politically shrewd move.

It gives Fernandez the moral authority to put the brakes on those scarred vehicles of the original decentralization reforms, the community school boards elected by voters, while at the same time shaking up the central bureaucracy.

As long as Fernandez continues to talk about empowering parents and teachers inside the schools, he cannot be labeled autocratic, like the pre-decentralization central board. His goal, he has said, is to empower the people who have a direct stake in improving the education of children.

But is this all a veiled attempt to return to centralized decision-making? Most observers, including critics of Fernandez, don't go that far.

Judith Baum, of the Public Education Association, favors the Fernandez efforts to reform the central board but questions his commitment to local participation—something she says is essential to improving schools, each with its own special problems and requirements.

Why isn't the iron-fisted chancellor putting his emphasis on better training for school board members, on cleaning up the local board-election process so independent parent candidates can be elected and on giving parents more of a purpose to get involved in their schools?

"There are many things that can be done to make the local school boards work rather than washing your hands of it," Baum said. "It's like saying, 'Do away with elections

because Lyndon Johnson stole one.'"

But Fernandez' predecessor, the late Richard Green, who died in May 1989, tried to breathe new life into decentralization without tampering too much with the basic structure. He was accused of foot-dragging by an impatient press. His impact was marginal.

The media-savvy Fernandez, by comparison, stormed into the city on January 1 like a gangbuster, firing principals and a superintendent, winning formerly unachievable victories in the state legislature and winning too the crucial support of editorial writers and many daily reporters.

The city watches with hope as he sets the stage for the newest chapter in school decentralization.

"He [Fernandez] must at once wear the terrible swift sword and keep it in the scabbard, because his truly crucial challenge is to rescue the morale of teachers and principals and steer it to better uses than have been found for it up to now. He would not be as shrewd as he appears to be if he has not sensed, as have too few legislators and voters, that government—at least his branch—is not a thing of laws but of fallible men and women who are not to be harried but helped if institutions are to be improved."

—Newsday columnist Murray Kempton

Kempton cuts to what's troubling many about all the emphasis on uprooting corruption and shaping governance. It's hard to imagine the New York City school system improving without clearer lines of communication and accountability, better policing of the local districts and a revamped central board. Those are the ingredients of a school system that must one day regain the confidence of the middle class.

But what does all the tinkering have to do with education, with what happens between student and teacher? Will any of the structured changes trickle down to the classrooms, the children and their enormous needs? As even Fernandez' supporters concede, those questions are unanswerable right now.

In the Miami school system, where Fernandez previously served as schools chief, the results are neither encouraging nor discouraging. The *Miami Herald*, in a parting report card, gave Fernandez an "incomplete." His reforms were too new and his tenure too short to be graded, the newspaper said.

The jury is still out, too, on how well the balmy city's school-based management is working. Miami's school system is more congenial and manageable than New York's. Miami has no strong unions, except for the teachers unit, with which Fernandez had a friendly relationship.

The future of school-based management hinges on the willingness of principals to share responsibility in earnest—and on the commitment of dedicated teachers willing to put in extra hours, often at no pay. The plan also depends on a strong central board that can assist the decision-making panels or take over failing schools.

Some Miami teachers complain that the decision-making committees dwell on minor issues. One school, for example, spent four weeks on the allocation of surplus sets of desks and chairs.

But another committee hired an intern graduate student as an assistant principal, a move that would be impossible in regulation-strangled New York.

If Fernandez succeeds in improving the quality of learning, his success will have more to do with motivating and training teachers, principals, parents and school board members than with any changes in governance. □

Rob Polner covers education for the *New York Post*.

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein

Managing Editor: Sheryl Larson

Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide,
John B. Judis, David Moberg
Salim Muwakkil

Assistant Managing Editors:

Glenora Croucher, Kira Jones

Culture Editor: Jeff Reid

European Editor: Diana Johnstone

New York Editor: Daniel Lazare

In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss

In Short Editor: Glenora Croucher

Contributing Editor: Peter Karman

Copy Editor: Mary Nick-Bisgaard

Researchers: David Andrews, Jim McNeill

Intern: Carina Chocano

Art Director: Miles DeCoster

Associate Art Director: Peter Hannan

Assistant Art Director: Lisa Weinstein

Production Assistant: Terry LaBan

Typesetter: Jim Rinnert

Publisher: James Weinstein

Associate Publisher: Bill Finley

Co-Business Managers:

Louis Hirsch, Finance

Kevin O'Donnell, Data Processing/Accounting

Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey

Office Manager: Theresa Nutall

Circulation Director: Chris D'Arpa

Assistant Director: Greg Kilbane

Phone Renewal Services: Vicki Broadnax

Concert Typographers: Sheryl Hybert

In These Times believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and nonsocialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

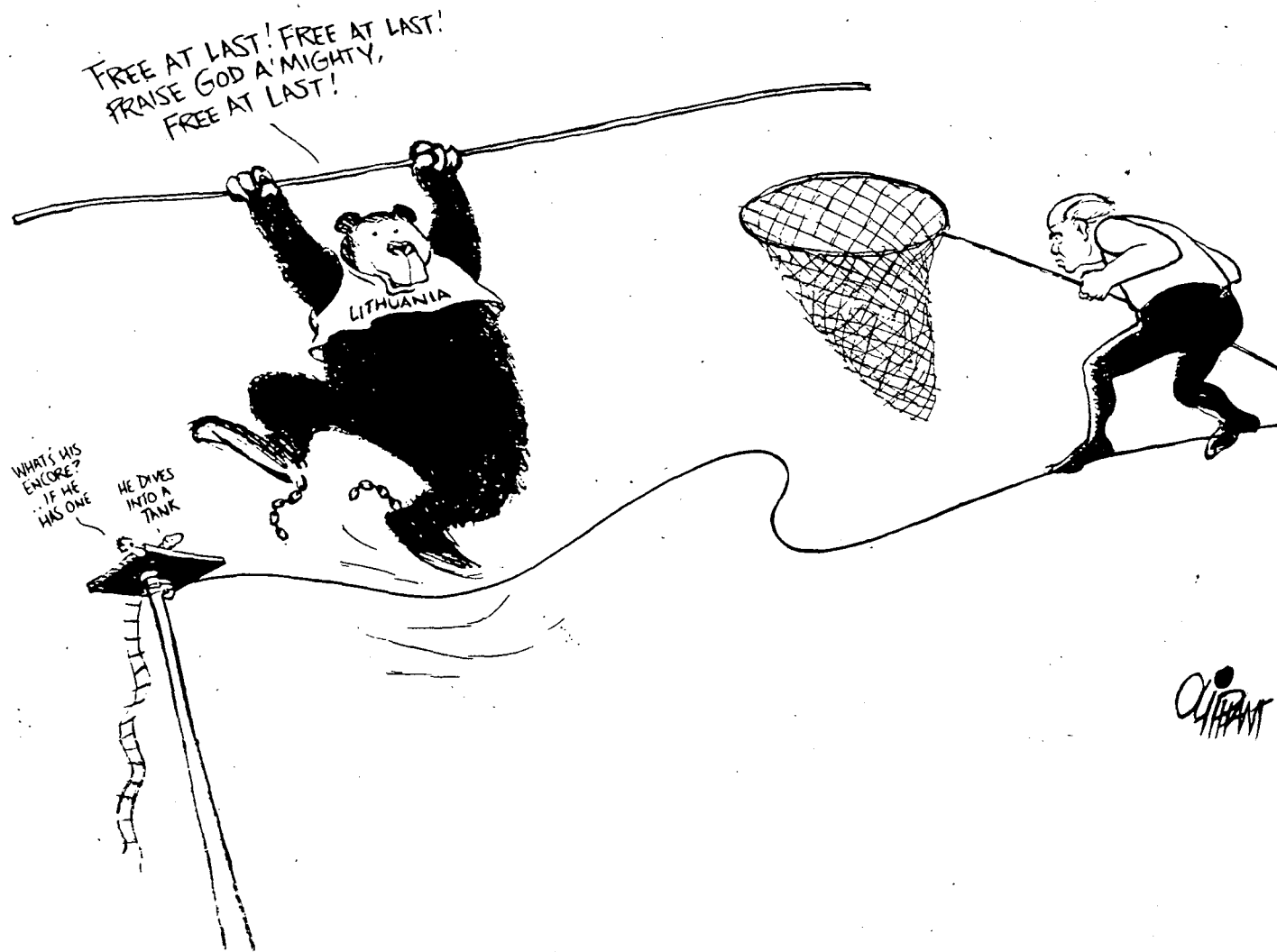
(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright ©1990 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times'* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in the Alternative Press Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$47.95 outside the U.S. and its possessions). Advertising rates sent on request. Back issues \$3; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

This issue (Vol. 14, No. 20) published April 11, 1990, for newsstand sales April 11-17, 1990.



Lithuania challenges Gorbachov to match principles with actions

Lithuania's declaration of independence is the boldest and most profound test so far of *perestroika* and Mikhail Gorbachov's commitment to democracy and a society of law. It is also a potentially dangerous act, one that could threaten Gorbachov's power and the Soviet Union's integrity—not to mention Lithuania's future. How Gorbachov deals with this situation, and how the Lithuanians respond, will therefore have a profound impact on the course of the Soviet Union's movement toward a genuinely pluralist democracy.

Fortunately, both sides seem to understand the need not to act precipitously, even while strongly defending their respective positions. While Gorbachov's response has at times been heavyhanded, he appears to be groping, along with the Lithuanians, toward a resolution that will be acceptable to both parties.

In this regard, the secession bill that overwhelmingly passed both houses of the Supreme Soviet last week, while unnecessarily harsh in some respects, is a step toward an accommodation with Lithuania that should also help keep the Union essentially intact. The measure gives substance to the Soviet Constitution's provision of a right to secede while also devising a procedure to protect against a stampede of secessionist movements. Under the bill, a republic wishing to become independent must meet the following requirements:

- The republic must hold a referendum in which all permanent residents are eligible to vote, and it must be passed by a two-thirds majority.
- The Soviet Congress of People's Deputies, the Soviets' expanded parliament, must then set a five-year transition period during which questions of state property and debt to the USSR are considered.
- A recall petition signed by 10 percent of the republic's permanent residents can force a repeat vote on secession, which also must receive a two-thirds majority.
- When all requirements are met, a final vote is put to the Con-

gress of People's Deputies.

Not surprisingly, Lithuanian leaders eager for a clean break were not pleased with the Supreme Soviet's bill. As Nikolai Medvedev, an ethnic Russian member of the Lithuanian parliament, complained, "This isn't a law of secession; it's a law against secession." But Lithuanian representatives in Moscow, confident of the result, are already suggesting that a referendum might be agreeable. And although five years seems a long time in the present context of lightninglike developments, negotiations over property and debt settlements will not be easy and may well take a few years. The 10-percent recall provision, on the other hand, seems designed to be a form of harassment that can only frustrate popular desires. One might argue that its purpose is to protect against decisions made in the heat of momentary passion or crisis, but it calls into question the sincerity of the government's commitment to the right embodied in the Soviet Constitution.

The Baltic States' sense of urgency is understandable. Aside from the republic of Georgia, which was forcibly incorporated into Soviet Russia in 1920, they are the only republics whose status was forced upon them. And unlike Georgia, which was incorporated during the turbulent days of civil war, the Baltic States were illegally seized—as a result of the Nazi-Soviet Pact—in 1940, and they have smarted under Soviet rule ever since.

But no matter how territory is acquired, secession is always difficult for a nation to accept—and dangerous for the government that allows it. Abraham Lincoln did not take kindly to the secession of the states that made up the Confederacy, and civil war ensued. And a threat of secession today by California, Arizona or New Mexico—all of which were illegally taken from Mexico as a result of the Mexican-American war—would cause a constitutional crisis in the U.S. But, of course, each nation has its own history and circumstances, and in the current situation, the Baltic States have both the moral and political high ground.

The problem facing Gorbachov is twofold: how to let the Baltic States go without facing a politically fatal backlash among Russian nationalists, and how to avoid encouraging republics that are more integral parts of the Union to follow suit. In a country that has few legal norms and a history of using brute force to solve problems of this nature, Gorbachov's is no easy task.

LETTERS

News from nowhere

I QUESTION WHETHER JOHN JUDIS, IN WRITING "U.S. automakers ride on rough terrain" (ITT, March 28) talked to many rank-and-file auto-workers.

Judis states that in the last decade U.S. car makers "have worked with the [United Auto Workers] to create a strange but welcome hybrid of Japanese 'teamism' and American industrial democracy. The shop-floor culture of American factories has been radically transformed, giving unionized auto-workers a far greater voice than ever before in determining their working conditions."

The autoworkers whom I know at GM Lordstown lack the most elementary democratic rights. Take free speech. In January 1988 management prohibited leafleting in the plant parking lot unless the leaflet had first been approved by GM labor relations. We filed a National Labor Relations Board charge and got that rule declared unlawful. Recently the controversy has resurfaced. GM workers got an annual bonus of only \$50, in contrast to the thousands of dollars received by workers at other auto companies. There was circulated on the shop floor a leaflet showing three \$50 bills—with GM Chairman of the Board Roger Smith's face in the center of each bill—and a leaflet that began "When things go wrong, as they usually will, and your daily road seems all uphill. When funds are low and debts are high. When you try to smile and can only cry, and you really feel you'd like to quit," and continued (when one turned the page), "Don't come to me, I don't give a shit. ROGER SMITH."

In response, Mike Cubbin, Lordstown complex manager, issued an information bulletin:

To: All Employees—The language of Shop Rule No. 29 has been modified as shown below to clarify the intended administration of the rule.

"The making or publishing of malicious statements concerning any employee, the company or its products."

Violation of the above rule or any other shop rules constitutes misconduct subjecting the violator to disciplinary action by management.

Where is the transformation of the shop-floor culture?

Judis also states in conclusion: "The government may eventually have to step in as it did with Chrysler—demanding higher performance in exchange for loan guarantees or trade and investment protection."

What happened to socialism? In my view, the profit-maximizing conduct by corporations like GM can be changed in one way only: by taking the plants out of the hands of their present owners and letting workers and community representatives run them in the public interest. Strategies that stop short of socialism end up multiplying existing contradictions. Thus the innovative strategy of threatening a boycott of GM products at Van Nuys, Calif., ended in management closing the Norwood, Ohio, plant that made the same car. As long as GM owns the plants, it will continue to put plants in the U.S. in competition with one another and move production out of the U.S. to low-wage factories in Mexico and overseas.

Staughton Lynd
Niles, Ohio

Looking ahead

J OHN JUDIS' CLAIMS (ITT, MARCH 28) THAT FUEL-economy standards are harmful to the domestic automobile industry and that the domestics cannot make cars that are both efficient and profitable are insupportable.

The fuel-economy standards passed by Congress in 1975 actually helped the domestics by forcing them to design the types of cars that were going to be demanded by the market in the '80s. Absent the standards, the domestics would have lost greater market share.

While I strongly agree with Judis that higher gasoline taxes would increase future demand for efficient cars, there has been good demand for efficient cars for quite some time, even for low-quality domestic models such as the Chevette and Escort. The reason the domestics have not made profits on efficient cars is primarily that the industry has never committed to making cars that are both efficient and attractive. Now that the Japanese automakers are beginning to compete in the luxury-car market, the domestics will no longer be able to live off their monopoly in this segment and will have to compete across the model spectrum.

Judis misses the point. Future cars will have to be much more fuel-efficient, whether because of another oil price shock or controls to ameliorate global warming. The history of the domestic industry suggests that it will ignore this reality as long as it can and continue down its path to short-term profits and long-term self-destruction. Judis' claims aside, the only way for the industry to survive is not to keep its collective head in the sand but rather to produce the types of cars that will be necessary in the 21st century. In this context, higher fuel-economy standards may be the best way to protect the long-term interests of autoworkers and the cities that depend on them. As shown in *Roger and Me*, relying on the Big Three for such security is hopeless.

Jeffrey A. Alson
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Revisionist chastity

T HIS IS IN REGARDS TO YOUR ARTICLE "SEX RESPECT tells teens to 'pet dogs, not dates'" (ITT, March 21).

I see the Morality Enforcers are at it again. Sex Respect wants to lick the problem of teenage promiscuity, pregnancies, etc., the same way that Nancy Reagan wanted to lick the "drug problem"—by telling us to "just say no." Granted, there is legitimate cause for action in both areas. But, as usual, the conservative approach is to blame the victim.

In this case, it is admonishing youngsters to not engage in sex while living in a culture replete with sexual salivating and innuendo. We are bombarded with sexual messages in the media; products don't sell without covert or subliminal sexual come-ons. (Aren't I more attractive to women for drinking Beer X? Don't I enhance my sex appeal with Lipstick Y?) In this light, I submit a revised "chastity pledge":

I choose chastity. I'll refrain from sex. I'll be celibate like a good girl boy should. Only if advertisers for Close-Up, Beck's, Quaker Oats, Nissan, Ford and General Foods L'Oreal, Maybelline, Budweiser, Chex. Kindly stop using it to hawk their goods.

Darryl Tahirali
El Toro, Calif.

Half-sane

I F MOST IN THESE TIMES READERS ARE SOCIALISTS and if the letters (ITT, Feb. 28) defending "New Age" twaddle are typical of those readers' thoughts, then, sisters and brothers, we're in deep trouble.

Michael Cerkowski, for example, is capable of writing and, presumably, regarding with satisfaction the phrase "a lot more harmless." Does he mean "a lot less harmful"? Anyway, this man's cerebrum has clearly been invaded by a large quantity of tapioca from outer space. He says that the New Age stuff can be portrayed as an expression of ignorance and irrationality ... only if one is willing to say the same of *all* religion and mysticism" (his italics). Well exactly, Michael; those of us who are still more than half-sane are not only willing to say so but do say so. Judaism Christianity Islam have certainly been bloodier, so far, but the intellectual, moral and emotional rot engendered by the New Age movement is no less pernicious for being less blatant.

By the way, *Reader's Digest* is as likely to publish an exposé of the New Age as it is to publish a critique of capitalism.

Robert Allen
Philadelphia

Turnabout

M AGGIE GARB'S ARTICLE ON CIVIL RIGHTS OF pregnant drug users (ITT, Feb. 7) notes the argument that a fetus possesses civil rights apart from those of the pregnant woman, rights that may conflict with the woman's.

Persons who accept that argument may also advocate that a pregnant woman's activities be limited in order to benefit the fetus. Less common, however, is advocacy of societal intervention to enrich the woman's life in order to benefit the fetus. For example, Reagan and Bush administration officials decried the effect of illicit

drugs on fetuses. Those same administrations, however, worked hard to reduce food programs that nourished pregnant women, prenatal care opportunities and neonatal care availability.

If an anti-drug zealot advocates societal intervention to limit a pregnant woman's life in order to benefit a fetus yet also opposes societal intervention to benefit a fetus by expanding a woman's life, "drugs" and "fetuses" are simply being used as an excuse to implement a wider social agenda intended to limit citizens' lives.

Richard Lawrence Miller
Kansas City, Mo.

Disposable society

A LEXANDER COCKBURN'S ARTICLE "THE POGO Fallacy" (ITT, March 21) is a logical fallacy. The analogy he used to compare the inadequacy of a study that showed higher tuberculosis rates among blacks and the environment makes no sense. In fact, it's dangerous to the planet. While fault cannot be laid upon the black population for genetics—or for the racism involved in the study—fault can be laid upon the U.S. population (or any other wasteful society) for the ecological blight we are now facing.

Large corporations and banks (through lending policies) have helped to create the current environmental crisis through bottom-line business practices (greed), but they could not have accomplished the level of destruction we currently enjoy without a docile consumer population. People must realize that when they buy something packed in styrofoam they are contributing to the degradation of the ozone layer; we must realize that when we buy chemical cleaners we are polluting our water. If people wouldn't buy the stuff, companies wouldn't make it. If we would hold companies and the government truly responsible for environmental atrocities, we wouldn't be in the dire straits we're in.

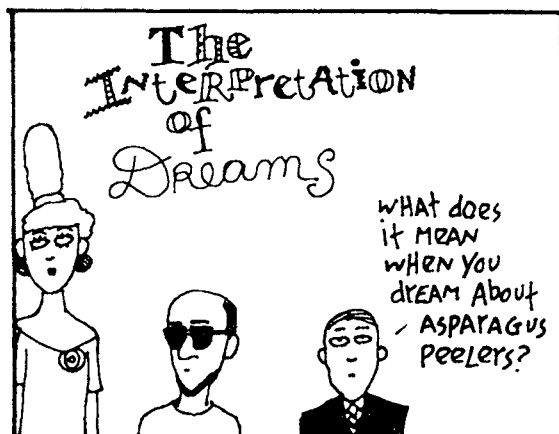
Cockburn also criticizes the need to change our values. Let's face it: we don't know what living with nature means. This is a disposable society. Our houses and businesses are built with the least possible care for conservation and with the least possible use of solar power.

As long as we view our planet as a resource to be plundered and as a dumping ground we are not going to live in harmony with it.

A final message to Cockburn: we cannot go around blaming others and sit back feeling smug while the problem remains. Empowerment is the key to grass-roots action and real social change.

Gary L. Quay
State College, Pa.

SYLVIA



Nicole Hollander 4-22

by Nicole Hollander

Mischaracterizing Nation of Islam bankrupts debate on important issues

By Richard Drury and Rebecca Weston

WE ARE WRITING REGARDING THE ARTICLE by Paul Bass on the visit of Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad of the Nation of Islam to Yale Law School (*In These Times*, Feb. 28). Our main criticisms of the Bass article are that, like most coverage of the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the mainstream media, it fundamentally misunderstands the nature of the Black Power movement and it buys into the standard practice of blaming the victim of the drug problem rather than seeing the drug crisis in the context of a history of oppression.

The opening paragraph, which characterizes Muhammad's speech as delivering "anti-Jewish hate-mongering" and failing to deliver "information about how the NOI has succeeded in ridding Washington housing projects of drugs," points up Bass' fundamental misunderstanding of the NOI's work and message. The NOI devotes a great deal of energy to exposing how black people and other people of color have consistently been exploited by powerful white people in this country and around the world. It is a fundamental critique of traditional historical teachings that have consistently excluded the contributions of people of color while both glorifying the accomplishments of people of European descent and overlooking their faults. The NOI has done a great deal to unmask the racism of the "founding fathers" and other venerated leaders of our country. For instance, Muhammad discussed how Eli Yale, founder of this university, made his fortune with the East India Company trading in slaves and opium. Calling the founders racist slave owners and bringing up this country's his-

toric racism is often interpreted by the mainstream media as anti-white or a message of hate. We see it instead as a necessary correction of a history that has been consciously and subconsciously distorted. It is also a message that the present relative situation of black and white people in this country is no coincidence but is the direct

The Nation of Islam has done a great deal to unmask the racism of the "founding fathers" and other venerated leaders.

result of a history in which elite members of the latter group have consistently oppressed the former.

It is virtually the same message as that preached by Malcolm X, who, like Muhammad, was the national spokesperson for the NOI, and similar also to the perspective of the Black Panther Party and of Stokely Carmichael. Ironically, time after time, the anti-racist principles of people of color have been appropriated in order to exclude these and other black nationalists from places like Yale. We see this same scenario playing out in Muhammad's visit to Yale.

Racism: Many of these white voices speak up against alleged racism only when it comes from the mouth of a black person but were silent when white supremacist William Shockley, homophobes Lewis Powell, Robert Bork and Cardinal Patrick O'Connor, racists William Bradford Williams and Meir Kahane and countless others took the podium at Yale University. This is especially bizarre

since, as a result of Bork's and Powell's homophobia, gay people are rotting in prison because of whom they love; as a result of Reynold's policies, people of color are denied equal rights; as a result of attitudes like Kahane's, Palestinians are being killed by the hundreds. Unlike the NOI, these figures are known to be responsible for past and ongoing repression.

Drugs: Which brings us to Bass' second fundamental misconception. He contends that Muhammad did not address the NOI's drug work. Bass does not understand that the story of white domination and black subordination is at the heart of the NOI's analysis of and prescription for the drug problem. The NOI disagrees with the portrayal in the mainstream media that drugs are the product of a dysfunctional black community. Instead, the NOI sees drugs as part of a larger story of white domination, and thus the history of white domination is crucial to the understanding of drugs.

Moreover, to accuse Muhammad of dwelling on history instead of discussing the NOI's approach to drug addiction is to miss the relationship between the two. Muhammad argued that many oppressed people turned to drugs precisely because they have been denied access to their own histories of contribution to U.S. development specifically and international achievements more generally. Thus, a crucial aspect of the NOI's approach to getting people off drugs is to educate them about both their social, cultural and religious histories and the power relations involved in the suppression of that history in mainstream liberal America.

Bass contends that Muhammad was "anti-Jewish," and from the lead paragraph one would think that Muhammad did no-

thing at his talk but criticize Jews. In fact, Bass points out only one troubling statement, and we know of no others. We make no apologies for the statement, or for any other derogatory statements that may have been made by Muhammad or by any other speakers. But the mainstream media consistently ignores the empowering elements of the NOI's message in emphasizing such comments.

In this instance, Muhammad's statement was made in the context of criticizing Jewish slave traders, but he quickly followed up by explaining that this does not make him anti-Jewish any more than his criticism of black African slave traders makes him anti-black. We think that the only way in which Bass could have come away from the talk believing that Muhammad had spent a substantial amount of time criticizing Jews was by making the common mistake of conflating anti-Zionism and anti-Jewishness. Muhammad did criticize Zionism at length, but this is not a criticism of Jews as people. Some of the most orthodox Jews in Israel are among the staunchest critics of Zionism. Bass also does not mention Muhammad's praise of Moses and Jesus, and his claims that their messages were one and the same with the Moslem prophet Muhammad and that the problem is with some of their followers who have fallen away from the message of the prophets. (For example, Muhammad mentioned the role of Calvinist Christianity in the rise of capitalism.)

Religious intolerance: Bass ridicules Muhammad's "UFO." Muhammad was referring to a vision that Minister Louis Farrakhan claims to have had in a dream, in which he was transported to a flaming wheel in the sky where Elijah Muhammad warned him of the attack on Muammar Khadafy in Tripoli. One should keep in mind that the NOI is a religious organization that, like most religions, believes in the mystical. Bass does not ridicule Ezekiel's wheel, the burning bush, the virgin birth, Joseph Smith's revelation of the Book of Mormon or any number of other religious episodes. Poking fun at the NOI's mysticism is itself a form of religious intolerance.

Finally, we feel it necessary to defend Law & Liberation as an organization since Bass casts aspersions on our commitment to the concerns "of those oppressed because of their race, class, gender, [or] sexual orientation." Our invitation of Muhammad is not an endorsement of everything he says, any more than an invitation to Malcolm X would have been a wholehearted endorsement of every part of his message. Few revolutionaries are perfect. As they say in law school, "You can't find a perfect plaintiff." From our privileged position at the Yale Law School it is easy to maintain ideological purity and to criticize others. But the fact of the matter is that the NOI has the endorsement of a large number of some of the most disadvantaged members of our society; it is not our endorsement they seek. The NOI's message resonates with a significant community, and we should hear what it is that is being said. This does not mean that we should not question Abdul Alim Muhammad if he makes hateful statements. We should. But we should also pay him the respect deserving of a leader of his stature and be careful not to mischaracterize his message. ■

Richard Drury and Rebecca Weston are members of Law & Liberation at Yale University.

Which of these 10 secret incentives will lure you to The Soviet Union in 1990? Ask Anniversary Tours!

ALMA ATA Its name means "Father of Apples," it's tucked into a picturesque mountain valley at the foot of the lofty Tien Shan range, and you'll fall in love with it—guaranteed!

It's in Soviet Central Asia, it's another world **BUKHARA** 2500 years old, and it was a major center of the ancient Great Silk Road. Magnificent Islamic architecture. Come see it, before it gets a minute older!

DUSHANBE There, on the banks of a mountain river in far-off Tajikistan, the men wear Tyubeteika skull caps, and everyone shops in noisy, colorful, wonderful public markets. On three sides there are soaring mountains—a haunting, unforgettable sight at twilight, not to be missed. Don't miss out!

Its elevation is 3000 feet and it's just north of Mt. **EREVAN** Ararat, where Noah is said to have climbed out of his ark after the flood subsided. In 1990, it will be 2771 years old, give or take a few seasons. Sometimes it's spelled Yerevan, but not by Anniversary Tours.

Of course, we'll take you to all the more familiar places as well—Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and more, with their wonderful historic sights. We rest our case: at Anniversary Tours, we're the experts when it comes to the Soviet Union. And we can suggest many more fascinating and unusual destinations in the USSR!

Can't decide? Call or write for our free brochure!

ANNIVERSARY TOURS • 330 SEVENTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, NY 10001
IN NEW YORK STATE (212) 465-1200 • OUT OF STATE TOLL-FREE (800) 366-1336

Either way, it's the capital of Armenia, the USSR's smallest republic.

KHABAROVSK Almost but not quite as far east as you can get in the Soviet Union (try Vladivostok, or Nakhodka, the main Pacific coast entry port for Japanese travelers). A main junction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, which it is never called by the Soviets (to them it's the "Great Siberian"). On the Amur River, which forms the border with China for over 1000 miles.

This is the capital of the North Caucasian autonomous Republic of Kabardin-Balkar, in the Russian Federation. The perfect spot if you want a great view of the towering Caucasian range, not far from Europe's highest peak, 18,481-foot Mt. Elbrus. Be the first one on your block to go there!

NOVOCHERKASSK This is the heart of "Cossack Country, where the 500-year-old traditions of those bold and skillful warriors—including the fierce and ferocious Yermak Timofeyevich, legendary conqueror of Siberia—are

preserved in the Don Cossack History Museum. 25 miles from Rostov-on-Don, the gateway to the Volga Don Canal.

ORDZHONIKIDZE You don't have to pronounce it to enjoy the marvelous vistas of this capital of the autonomous republic of North Ossetia, on the northern slopes of the Greater Caucasian Range. It's the northern entrance to the spectacular Georgian Military Highway. The southern terminus is Tbilisi, capital of the Soviet Republic of Georgia.

PALEKH This is the place northeast of Moscow where superbly skilled artisans make those marvelous little black lacquered boxes, decorated with fanciful fairy tale paintings. It's just down the road from Ivanovo. 30 miles east, hang a sharp left at the traffic light.

Founded in 1340, an ancient monastery town **ZAGORSK** 44 miles from Moscow. A principal center of religious pilgrimage for over 500 years. If you've been looking for the tomb of Boris Goudonov, this is the place.

By Zolton Ferency

TENS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS OF ALL ages and all walks of life are, for reasons of their own, regularly using a wide range of drugs. Because the chronic use of narcotic drugs can produce severe physical and mental reactions, the widespread use of such drugs poses a public-health problem of serious proportions.

Many of the most popular drugs are available only by prescription or are prohibited completely by criminal sanctions. Supplying the demand for drugs, therefore, has become a lucrative business for the underworld and has produced criminal behavior ranging from prostitution and petty theft to armed robbery and murder.

Long experience, beginning in colonial times with the widely used intoxicant alcohol, has demonstrated how difficult it can be to bring the availability and use of a popular substance under some semblance of management and control.

One experiment with the total abolition of the manufacture, distribution and use of alcohol under the Volstead Act—more familiarly known as "Prohibition"—proved to be a failure. Not surprisingly, the alcohol industry was driven underground and the unlawful manufacture and distribution of alcohol created huge fortunes for underworld kingpins, gang warfare over disputed sales territory and corruption in the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies. Even more tragically, Prohibition ultimately resulted in vast disrespect for the law. Violations of the law became commonplace and generally acceptable. Repeal of Prohibition thus became inevitable.

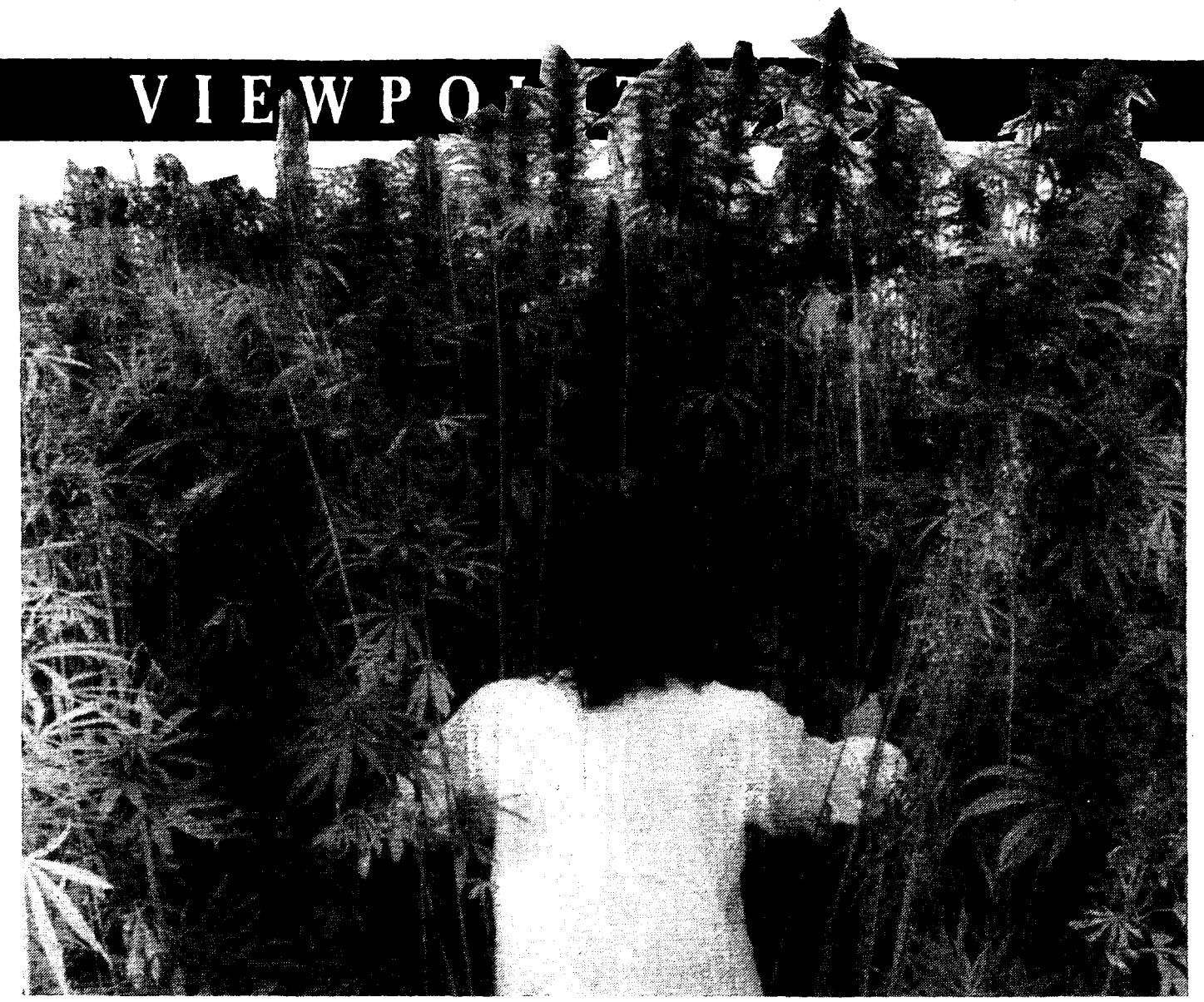
Many would argue, with good reason, that the repeal of Prohibition did not solve the many problems brought about by the intemperate use of alcohol. It cannot be denied, however, that repeal did put an end to the dissolution and corruption caused by open, violent criminal conduct involved in unlawful alcohol trafficking. We are devoting some attention and resources, albeit not enough, to education, treatment and rehabilitation of people with alcohol problems, and we are not distracted from those efforts, feeble as they may be, by devoting attention and resources to combating crime caused by underworld profiteers.

No easy solution: There is no one universal "solution" to America's "drug problem," nor can there be. The problem will have to be managed on a case-by-case basis—one drug at a time and one user at a time. Successful treatment programs to the extent that they exist are structured precisely on that kind of a basis. Each person on the way to recovery knows that life will have to be lived "one day at a time" in order to survive. Society's task is to assist those who are ready to end their drug dependency with all available resources, a task that we have yet to assume.

For the foregoing reasons and others developed by researchers and experts in the field, I have put forward a plan for one state, Michigan, to manage and control one drug, marijuana. This specific plan was formulated in a deliberate effort to avoid complexity and to utilize Michigan's many resources already in place.

The major provisions of the plan are as follows:

- The state of Michigan would license



A plan for Michigan to legalize marijuana

persons to produce marijuana in Michigan under strict controls and supervision.

- All marijuana produced in Michigan by licensed producers would be purchased under the auspices of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC).

- Using already-established state laboratories, all marijuana produced in Michigan and purchased by the state would be tested for purity and potency, as is done with liquor.

- The MLCC would package the marijuana and distribute it through the existing marketing system to the Specially Designated Distributors (SDDs), who are already licensed and supervised, for subsequent retail sale, much the same as liquor is presently handled.

- Marijuana would be sold by SDDs under the same supervision and control presently utilized by liquor sales. No marijuana would be sold in bars, taverns or beer and wine takeout stores.

- Purchasers of marijuana would be required to meet the same legal qualifications presently applied to liquor sales.

- The purchase, possession and use of marijuana would be subject to law much the same as liquor. For example, it would be unlawful to possess in public a package of marijuana without a Michigan seal or with the seal broken.

The retail price of marijuana would be established at a level that would make underworld bootlegging unprofitable, much the same as liquor prices are established.

- Unlike the deplorable advertising practices presently utilized by the Michigan lottery, there would be no advertising of marijuana.

- Profits derived from the sale of marijuana would be devoted to public education, counseling, treatment and rehabilitation with respect to all mood-altering sub-

stances, such as caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, amphetamine, cocaine, heroin, etc.

Careful study has disclosed no disadvantages to the plan, and the advantages are manifold. The only issue is whether or not the plan, or one like it, should be adopted. Because the state is already in the liquor and gambling business, for many of the

Legalizing marijuana and regulating sales would undercut organized crime.

same reasons, the morality question is moot.

The greatest single advantage of the plan is, of course, the lifting up and out of the underworld of a vast commodity market into the clear light of day, where it can be managed with complete public accountability.

Recent studies show that 25 million to 30 million Americans are regularly using marijuana, and one study indicates that approximately 15,800 tons are being consumed annually. In our state, the underworld retail price of marijuana ranges from \$135 to \$200 per ounce. In Michigan, apparently, one million of our neighbors are using marijuana and spending considerable sums for it.

There are indications that the adoption

of the proposed plan might produce a slight temporary increase in marijuana use but that the market would soon assert itself. At the same time, however, the sales of other "social" drugs such as crack, cocaine, PCP, etc., might decline, and that would be a great gain from both public-health and criminal-justice standpoints.

The adoption of the proposed plan would also result in the transfer of scarce police resources, such as the helicopters and police personnel used in "Operation HEMP," etc., to more serious crimes of violence.

Michigan is one of 18 "monopoly" states engaged in the marketing of liquor and has been since the repeal of Prohibition. As a monopoly state, we acquire liquor from licensed distilleries and market it through our own system of controls. Prices are constantly adjusted as needed. The method has worked well in controlling liquor, and Michigan, unlike some of the "open" states, has never had a major liquor scandal. That model would work equally well with the marketing of marijuana.

The response to the proposed plan in areas of the state where some of its details have been more widely publicized has been generally favorable. After further public discussion and understanding of the plan, it could be a solid first step toward gaining a greater measure of control over the entire drug problem.

Zolton Ferency is a professor of criminal justice at Michigan State University.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

MOVING?

Send changes with old mailing label to:
In These Times
1912 Debs Ave.
Mt. Morris, IL 61054

PROBLEMS?

If you have any problems or questions regarding your subscription, please write or call:
1-800-435-0715 (National)
1-800-892-0753 (Illinois)

Vineland

By Thomas Pynchon
Little Brown & Co., 385 pp., \$19.95

By Patrick J. Comiskey

Pynchon's loopy universe more twisted than DNA

WITH VINELAND, HIS FIRST novel in nearly 17 years, Thomas Pynchon situates himself squarely within the recent transformation of '60s culture from spiritual force to historical fact. In particular, he explores what lays between that spirit and the nostalgia for it—the detritus of popular culture that's made any system of values, even the simplest, so difficult to decipher. It's probably the most accessible of all of Pynchon's novels to date—it does lack the tremendous scope of *Gravity's Rainbow* or *V.*, but readers will also be surprised by how his vision has subtly changed, from the bleak dissipation of the human psyche to a cautiously redemptive, even affirming resolution.

Vineland is named after a fictional Northern California county, a beautiful and mysterious place shaded by redwoods, shrouded by Pacific fogs, echoing the lore of Vinland the Good, the name Leif Ericson gave to that spit of New World he bumped into around the year 1000. It's a land steeped in myth and shadow, informed by its former inhabitants, the Yurok Indians, for whom "everything had a name—fishing and snaring places, acorn grounds, rocks in the river, boulders on the banks, groves and single trees with their own names, springs, pools, meadows, all alive, each with its own spirit ... creatures like humans but smaller, who had been living here when the first humans came."

Good and crazy: As if to disrupt all this karma, we find out the book is set in the year 1984—smack dab in the middle of the Reagan revolution. With Orwellian fortitude, the government has assaulted the moral codes of its citizens, enlisting all the appropriate agencies—FBI, DEA, DOJ, an amalgam of Meese police—to descend in force upon Vineland's inhabitants. As the novel begins, it's morning in Vineland—on the day that Zoyd Wheeler, an aging longhair who lives with his teenage daughter Prairie, must engage in some certifiably crazy act in order to claim a mental-disability check and thereby show he's still around and still benign. Usually it's just a simple matter of defenestration; this time, though, something is palpably wrong with the setup.

What's wrong is the bigger-than-life presence of Brock Vond, a federal prosecutor who's every bit as fascist, macho and seductive as his monosyllabic name implies. (Insert, say, an armed-to-the-teeth Lee Atwater here and you have the idea.) Meanwhile, there's Prairie, a mall rat who's lately been getting sorta curious about the almost-mythic mother she never knew, Frenesi Gates.



Turns out Vond is curious about her himself and plans a final assault on Frenesi by seizing her daughter. Prairie escapes, however, landing in the capable hands of her mother's old sidekick, D.L. Chastain. Through D.L. (one of Pynchon's most fully realized female characters, by the way, neither goddess nor sex toy, almost a paragon of self-sufficiency), Prairie starts piecing together Frenesi's ambiguous history.

Prairie learns of 24fps, a radical film collective Frenesi and D.L. ran with in the '60s that "believed in the ability of close-ups to reveal and

FICTION

devastate. When power corrupts, it keeps a log of its progress, written into that most sensitive memory device, the human face." But Prairie finds out that her mother, too, was

corrupted, and not only fell into bed with Vond but acted as his accomplice, a partnership that culminated in the death of Weed Atman, a kind of Tim Leary stand-in and leader of a student revolt at nearby College of the Surf.

The point of disorder: If all this sounds confusing, it is (and there's still an ocean of plot I'm not even dipping my toe into!), but not nearly to the extent one finds in Pynchon's earlier novels. Pynchon's plots have always had more twists than a DNA string, with barely justified walk-ons constantly wreaking havoc on the through-line. But that's always been his point, I think. Life simply doesn't have that kind of well-mapped, integrated proportion—why should a novel? The effect is vertiginous; it's also hilarious. In Pynchon's universe, paranoid fantasies have a

habit of mysteriously, inexplicably taking flesh—as when the seaside laboratory of the shady multinational Chipco disappears overnight and what's left in its place is a huge "size 20,000" footprint.

And he's back with his loony-toon nametags. We know from his earlier novels how much weight Pynchon places on names—recall how "sloth" and "entropy" were both embedded in "Tyrone Slothrop," to cite just one example. Here it's no different—at the heart of "Zoyd" we shouldn't be surprised to find one half of the "yo-yo" that's appeared in all three of his earlier novels. There is, of course, a "crook" at the core of Brock's name (which, remember, rhymes with "crock" and "cock.") And "Frenesi Gates" is a veritable motherlode of ambiguity—in her name we extract "free" and "sin," "sage" and "siren," as well as glimpses of "frenetic" and "serene," two indispensable components of her character, and the ominous "negate," which suggests how one half of her nature eclipses the other.

What can we make of all this? Through all the verbal games and plot twists a single message keeps reverberating back to the front: pay attention. Frenesi iterates, in one of several extended '60s flashbacks, that she's in the midst of a cultural movement that will not reverse itself "because too many of us are learning to pay attention." And early on Prairie does some hanging out at the Sisterhood of the Kunoichi Attentives, a convent for ninja nuns set deep in the protective woodland. But Pynchon is cagey enough to beg the question—how are we to do this, in the face of constant media blast, within the deep shadow of popular culture? What must we do to keep on top of our lives in the midst of so much artifice?

In the end, when all these forces come together at a huge picnic sponsored by Frenesi's extended family, we get a clue of sorts, which comes from Emerson:

Secret retributions are always restoring the level, when disturbed, of the divine justice. It is impossible not to tilt the beam. All the tyrants and proprietors and monopolists of the world in vain set their shoulders to heave the bar. Settles forever more the ponderous equator to its line, and man and mote, and star and sun, must range to it, or be pulverized by the recoil.

It's Vond the Reaganaut who's doing the heaving in this novel, a force that has its roots in decades of political myopia. That he should get his comeuppance—and he does, don't worry—in *Vineland*, a place steeped in myths deeper than political agendas can plumb, is appropriate and gives us, for perhaps the first time in a Pynchon novel, a glimmer of hope. ■

© 1990 Patrick J. Comiskey
Patrick J. Comiskey is a writer living in Chicago.

Through all the verbal games and plot twists, a single message reverberates: pay attention. But Pynchon is cagey enough to beg the question—what must we do to keep on top of our lives in the midst of so much artifice?

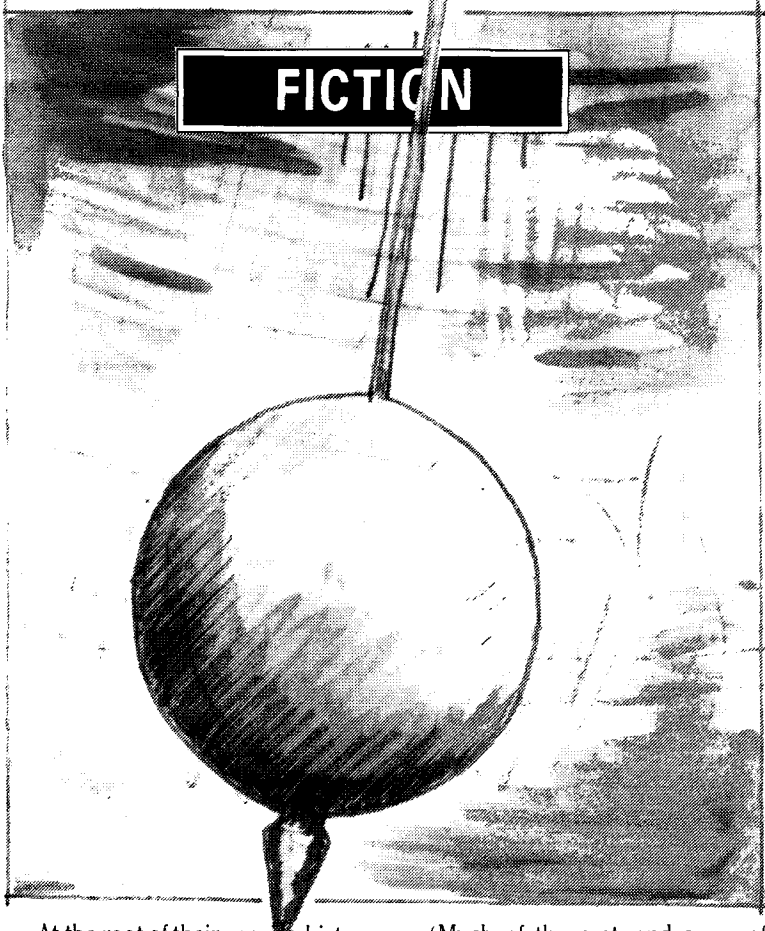
Foucault's Pendulum

By Umberto Eco
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
641 pp., \$22.95

By Jim Naureckas

Eco's swinging party: the plot and the pendulum

FICTION



THERE'S A LOT OF UNFAIR TALK about how Umberto Eco is the most unread author of our time. At 641 pages, his latest book is big, but not monstrosously so, and Eco bends over backward to make his new work entertaining. It's set not in a medieval monastery, like *The Name of the Rose*, but in modern-day Italy.

And for those suffering from meg-aloidophobia, the fear of Big Ideas, Eco includes what may be a tacit disclaimer: "You sometimes seem profound," his narrator is told, "but it's only because you piece a lot of surfaces together to create the impression of depth."

So those who found *Foucault's Pendulum* under the Christmas tree and still haven't gotten around to starting it should not be intimidated. As everyone knows by now, the novel is not about a difficult French philosopher—the title refers to a 19th-century geophysicist's device for demonstrating the rotation of the Earth. It's not about geophysics either: it's a send-up of the worldview of the lunatic fringe, the *Illuminatus Trilogy* with a European accent.

A theory of everything: Eco recognizes the entertainment potential of the coherently nutty: "As long as you don't believe in them, the collision of two ideas—both false—can create a pleasing interval," he writes. His protagonist is a research consultant, "a kind of private eye of learning ... the Sam Spade of culture," who with a couple of co-conspirators at a second-rate Milanese publishing house has a hobby of exploring "the notion that everything might be mysteriously related to everything else."

Their boss, realizing that "people will gobble up ... everything that says the opposite of what they read in their books at school," orders them to begin a line of books on occult subjects, mostly studies of how various secret societies control all historical phenomena.

Eco's trio doesn't mind that it's all claptrap; the publisher plans to weasel most of the authors into paying for the privilege of publication anyway. Actually, they find the anti-logical reasoning intellectually exciting: "If everything is as it appears to be, why go on living?" So faced with stacks of contradictory conspiracy theories, they decide to synthesize their own in their spare time. "If there had to be a cosmic plot, we could invent the most cosmic of all."

At first their project—the creation of an all-explaining Plan—seems a wonderful success: "Wanting connections, we found connections—always, everywhere and between everything. The world exploded into a whirling network of kinships, where everything pointed to everything else, everything explained everything else."

At the root of their pseudo-history are the Knights Templar, a medieval order of crusaders alternately described as "martyrs to free thought," "bankers of God," "devotees of a Satanic sect" and "a bunch of bums." In any case, they were dissolved by the pope and the king of France in the 14th century, although legends, which the Plan-makers seize on, have them going underground and influencing history through an array of shadow organizations.

A secret ballet: In the elegant and ingenious hypothesis spun out by Eco's armchair paranoiacs, the Templars divided themselves into six "bands of invisibles" to guard a terrible secret, the control of the hermetic energies of the Earth, which they knew could be fully utilized only in the 20th century. According to the theory, this absurdly complex Plan went awry, with time and intrigue severing the connections between the various cabals. "Europe today is the theater of a secret ballet," the investigators surmise. "with groups seeking and not finding one another, while each group knows that one small piece of information might be enough to make it master of the world.... History is simply the result of this battle to construct a lost message."

Eco makes a heroic effort to include everything in the Plan, tying together Rosicrucians, Masons of every stripe, Jesuits, cabalists, the French Revolution, subways, druids, Francis Bacon and the Old Man of the Mountain. The Bavarian Illuminati featured in the trilogy by Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea are here as well, although perhaps out of professional jealousy Eco relegates them to a supporting role: "Splendid organizational talent but quite confused ideas," one character sniffs.

(Much of the cast, and some of the same bizarre theories, can also be found in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, a work of alleged non-fiction that can be quite entertaining if read as *Foucault's Pendulum* with a straighter face.)

When it's all added up, it has an epic sweep that dwarfs real history: "Armies slaughtered one another across the plains of Europe, popes hurled anathemas, emperors met, hemophiliac and incestuous, in the hunting lodge off the Palatine gardens, all to supply a cover, a sumptuous facade for the work of these wireless operators who in the House of Solomon were listening for pale echoes from the Umbilicus Mundi."

Joycean delight: It may take a peculiar bent to appreciate the fun in this—it might help if you are fascinated by real-world conspiracies like the Iran-contra network—but Eco's recapitulation of the history of the world is lively, even breathless. The avalanche of facts reveals Eco's Joycean delight in language, also manifested in his frequent lists of names conspiratorial, alchemical and diabolical.

The dish is sweetened with pop-culture references, including an obsessive interest in Humphrey Bogart and enough cartoon characters to make one wonder if Eco should write the screenplay for *Roger Rabbit II*. (Mickey Mouse's engagement to Minnie actually is used as a clue to the suppressed fact that Jesus married Mary Magdalene at the wedding at Cana.) As an extra bonus, he tosses in lessons on how to run a vanity press, how to be a lion-tamer, the correct way to play pinball and many other useful things.

But the conspiracy game is what makes *Foucault's Pendulum* a good read, and Eco quite obviously took

as much pleasure as his characters in constructing his alternative universe. The strange thing about the book is that five-sixths of the way through it the author begins viciously punishing his protagonists for indulging in *exactly* the same intellectual sport that he himself has spent the last several years on. On this Swaggart-esque condemnation of his own amusements hangs most of the ideas Eco wants to get across, which are by far the weakest part of the book.

The tragic fates meted out to each of Eco's heroes are the direct results of their corruption by the Plan of their own devising. "You can reach the point," they learn, "where there is no longer any difference between pretending to believe and developing the habit of believing."

Their sin is not so much the trivialization of history as the belief in history as an explanatory force, even in an ironic way. "He who embarks on the creation of worlds is already tainted with corruption and evil," Eco writes, in a gnostic formulation of Hannah Arendt's thesis that ideology is inevitably totalitarian: "The whole world is an enigma, a harmless enigma that is made terrible by our own mad attempt to interpret it as though it had an underlying truth."

Seeds of destruction: *Foucault's Pendulum* serves as a companion of sorts to *The Name of the Rose*, which was set at the beginning of an enlightenment that already carried the seeds of its own destruction. The new book is set at the opposite end of modernism, in a Europe as spiritually devastated by lack of meaning as the Middle Ages were physically ravaged by plague and holy wars. (This procession is a favorite concern of philosopher Michel Foucault, who perhaps isn't as irrelevant to the book's title as everyone thinks.) "When men stop believing in God," according to Eco, "it isn't that they then believe in nothing; they believe in everything."

One character describes himself as a member of a generation "who ate disappointment for breakfast, lunch and dinner," with fascism, the Resistance and the Revolution as a succession of gods that failed. The narrator, a younger man, escaped disillusionment with the '60s by remaining cynical throughout, concluding that protest and politics were largely about sex. ("I liked Marx. I was sure that he and his Jenny had made love merrily. You could feel it in the easy pace of his prose and in his humor.") The experience of their two generations is, for Eco, the empirical proof that the construction of belief systems leads to the Red brigades, the gulag, the ovens.

(The Holocaust in particular hangs over the book like a funereal bird. The convergence between conspiratorial interpretations of history and anti-Semitism is dismissed by characters again and again—it's about the only instance of coincidence they will allow—but the crypto-fascist element in many of

the theories in which the Plan is forged keeps emerging. When Hitler is worked into the scenario, killing the Jews in order to find that portion of the cosmic message entrusted to Jerusalem, it marks the degeneration of the game into a disease.)

For Eco, the conspiracy theory symbolizes all the ideologies that attempt to bridge the explanatory gap left by the loss of faith in Roman Catholicism: "Mankind can't endure the thought that the world was born by chance, by mistake, just because four brainless atoms bumped into one another on a slippery highway," says a persona who functions as something of the book's superego. "So a cosmic plot had to be found."

"Isn't it said that history is a bloodstained and senseless riddle?" another character asks. "No, impossible; there must be a Design. There must be a Mind."

Life as spectator sport: In the end, these belief systems become personal psychological crutches: "There can be no failure if there really is a Plan. Defeated you may be, but never through any fault of your own. To bow to a cosmic will is no shame. You are not a coward—you are a martyr."

This is one thing if Eco is talking about belief in the power of the Templars, the Illuminati or the Elders of Zion to control our destinies. The book's point, however, is not to talk a few lunatics down from their ledges but to discredit the idea of political commitment, particularly to socialism. Whereas in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* the conspiracy stands for the possibility of underground resistance, Eco jettisons the concept of citizenship in favor of the ideal of being an "intelligent spectator," or at the most the protagonist in your own private drama that impinges on no one.

The pendulum, which by proving the movement of the Earth becomes a symbol of the "only stable place in the cosmos," in fact will be equally unmoving wherever it is hung. (Foucault's pendula are displayed at the Smithsonian, the U.N., Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry and several other locations in the U.S.) And Eco offers a hatful of suggestions as to where meaning may be found in today's uncertain world: in the human body; in a moment of beauty; in an existential act of courage; in "virile force, procreating"; even, why not, in a return to Jesus.

Welcome to the postmodern world, where "no piece of information is superior to any other." Leaving aside the question of how spiritually satisfying Eco's shopping list can be, it doesn't have much to offer toward the future of humanity as a community. An earlier generation of critics would have called Eco's vision "bourgeois"; now, lacking a unifying theory of society that links economics to politics to culture, we can say only that he writes like a yuppie.

Jim Naureckas is the editor of *Extra!*, the newsletter of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting.

The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Means of Ascent

By Robert A. Caro
Alfred A. Knopf
506 pp., \$24.95

By Kevin Kelly

LBJ: expedience is best teacher

ROBERT A. CARO WRITES IN *Means of Ascent*, the second part of his four-volume biography of Lyndon Baines Johnson: "[Johnson couldn't] comprehend the questions of morality or ethics raised by his actions." During the period the book covers, 1941 to 1948, Johnson's life became a lie. He invented a combat record, stole a Senate race and amassed a fortune by peddling his political services, all the while professing his own virtue.

This is a profoundly disturbing book. Caro's Johnson, destined to become our 36th president, stops at nothing. To curry favor with reactionary businessmen, the "liberal" Johnson opposes an anti-lynching law and peddles reactionary politics to Texas' ill-informed but always bigoted electorate. He buys 35,000 votes and disseminates slanders about his rival, the popular former governor, Coke Stevenson. He shows little respect for anyone, including wife Lady Bird. Johnson once told friends: "I talk everything over with her. Of course...I have a nigger maid and I talk my problems over with her too."

Caro's work is far more than an artful accretion of facts. By examining this period of Johnson's life, Caro means to lay bare the pillaging of America's democratic institutions. Johnson's media manipulation and unprecedented spending during the 1948 Senate contest helped usher in the age of sound bites. His use of radio and television to repeat basic campaign themes—namely, that his opponent was pro-labor—helped build a political culture where truth gave way to image. Robbed of meaning, Caro asserts, politics ceased to hold the interest of ordinary citizens. Much of the book's considerable power comes from Caro's ability to give Johnson's life larger meaning.

L.B. Jaded: The Johnson in Caro's first volume, *The Path to Power*, was a complex figure. Though self-serving and deceitful, the early Johnson brought electricity to rural Texas and taught impoverished schoolchildren to read. The Johnson of this volume is a desperate figure, madly clawing for power. Facing political death, he breaks all the rules.

The book opens where *The Path to Power* left off. In 1941 Rep.

Johnson, 32, lost his first Senate bid. The young favorite of President Franklin Roosevelt and House Speaker Sam Rayburn returned to the capital uncertain where to turn. Back in Washington Johnson learned defeat tempered his access

POLITICS

to power. He spent the next seven years in a terrible political limbo, plotting his resurrection.

Resurrection required contriving a war record. As a candidate, he had promised to fight. But once war was declared, constituents began asking where he was. Always one to overestimate his own importance, Johnson joined the Navy and then asked Roosevelt for admiral rank and a post overseeing wartime production. Since he had no business experience, his request got nowhere. Instead, he ended up flying a single air mission in the South Pacific as a congressional observer. The politically astute Gen. Douglas MacArthur, sensing Johnson could become a valuable ally, awarded him the Silver Star.

That's all Johnson needed. Speak-

ing with friends and reporters he turned 13 minutes of action into a battlefield career lasting months. He spoke passionately about dead bunkmates and pitched battles. During the 1948 campaign he cynically promoted his heroics by asking amputee veterans to introduce him.

After the war, still out of office, Johnson set out to build his fortune. The seed was KTBC, a small Austin radio station he had acquired in 1942. Businessmen seeking Johnson's favor bought airtime. In return for help with legislation, regulators extended the station's range. When critics charged him with influence peddling, Johnson deflected the questions by saying his wife owned the station. Gullible journalists accepted the explanation until the late '60s.

But politics interested Johnson more than money. So in 1948 he ran for the Senate again. The last two-thirds of Caro's book recount the campaign. Neither Johnson nor his business supporters, who counted on his influence to secure government contracts, held anything back. For the first time Texans were blitzed with radio commercials, flyers, leaflets and newspaper ads. The new age arrived. Writes Caro: "A Texas farm family had difficulty sitting down to a meal ... without hearing [Johnson's] voice."

Johnson broke every tradition of Texas and national politics. He smashed the campaign spending barrier, accepting contributions of \$50,000 in plain paper sacks. He drew crowds by dashing about in a helicopter. Rural folk who had never seen a chopper gawked while Johnson labeled his conservative rival a dupe of "union dictators" and Communists, charges he repeated over and over.

Vote of the living dead: When the stunts served only to make the contest close, Johnson used his financial muscle. He bought 35,000 votes from political godfathers in the Rio Grande Valley. He beat Stevenson by 87 votes. While Texas was used to voter fraud, Johnson took it to new levels. He not only stole more votes than any candidate ever had, he kept tallies rolling in up to five days after the polls had closed.

Caro obviously feels Stevenson's loss. He admires Stevenson's integrity and paints a wistful portrait of his campaign. The rancher drove from town to town shaking hands and made a few radio speeches. He didn't call names, didn't spend millions. Instead of lying and cheating his way to the top, Caro's Stevenson is archetypal American: a self-made man with a passion for the truth.

Caro's portrait of Stevenson reveals some limitations in his analysis. In his rush to lay Johnson bare and denounce the "new order" he helped usher in, Caro overlooks the shortcomings of his romanticized "old order." Stevenson was a passionate racist. He didn't support the New Deal, and he exercised little imagination while governing Texas. His presence in Washington would have added nothing to the national debate.

There are reasons to worry about future volumes. In the introduction Caro credits Johnson with giving African-Americans the right to vote. In doing so, he blithely overlooks the central role civil-rights activists played in ending segregation. If Caro buys the Great Man theory of history and fails to follow through on his thesis that Johnson both reacted to and shaped a new American political culture, then volumes three and four will surely disappoint.

Yet *Means of Ascent* largely succeeds. Incredibly—for we know Johnson wins the election—Caro's retelling is filled with suspense. Caro does it by making Stevenson someone we can't help but root for (which also causes him to overlook Stevenson's shortcomings). And the book becomes a political thriller as Johnson violates every rule of decency.

Johnson emerges as a dangerous man who knows what forces to exploit. There is little here to admire. Caro clearly detests Johnson and the changes he helped wrought. Under the onslaught of Johnson's buying power, the people lost their moorings. When Stevenson lost, Caro says, we lost. From then on lies and media manipulation would be used by the power-hungry to savage America's political culture. ■

Kevin Kelly is a journalist living in Dallas.

At the Minimal Mall

Rough CUTS BY JARED

Whitespace World

Wall hangings for less

Anarchy's Made @

Less Lessons

\$10/hour
\$25/half hour
\$50/quarter hour

The minimal mall features

New Age Muzak Lite (A.K.A. White noise)

Self-Service Bottled Water

B.Y.O. Bottle

Bald Boutique

Hairfree is carefree

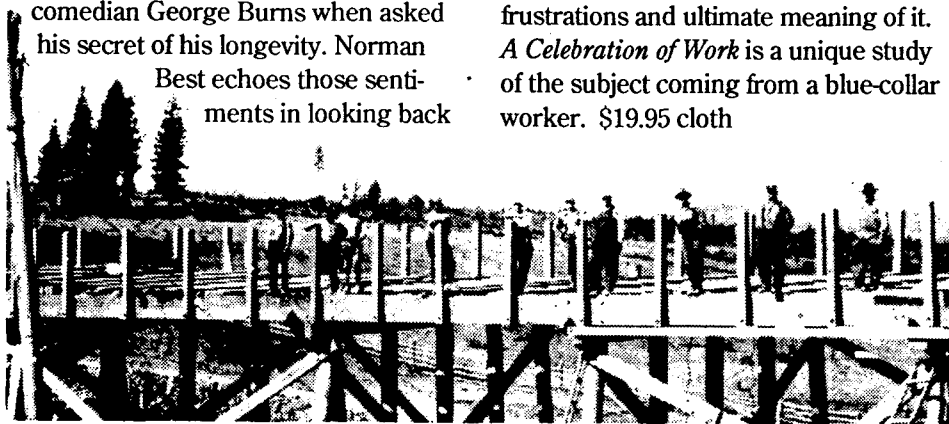
A Celebration of Work

By Norman Best

Edited, with an introduction, by William G. Robbins

"Be in love with your work," said comedian George Burns when asked his secret of his longevity. Norman Best echoes those sentiments in looking back

on a lifetime of labor, the rewards and frustrations and ultimate meaning of it. *A Celebration of Work* is a unique study of the subject coming from a blue-collar worker. \$19.95 cloth



The University of Nebraska Press • 901 N 17 • Lincoln 68588-0520

20 IN THESE TIMES APRIL 11-17, 1990

RECYCLED PAPER BY MAIL

WE MAKE BEAUTIFUL RECYCLED paper products, note cards, stationery, gift wrap, and many printing, copy, and computer papers. Compared to virgin paper, producing one ton of recycled paper uses half the energy and water, saves 17 trees, results in less air and water pollution, and saves landfill space. Send for our color catalog and try it.

EARTH CARE PAPER INC.
Box 3335, Dept. 57, Madison, WI 53704
(608) 256-5522

Women's Lives—Women's Choices

Statewide Conference on Reproductive Freedom

Saturday, April 28th
10 am - 3 pm, University YM/WCA
1001 South Wright, Champaign, Ill.

Participants include: Action for Reproductive Freedom—Champaign/Urbana, McLean County Voice for Choice, Grassroots Group of Second-Class Citizens, Chicago Emergency Clinic Defense Coalition, Resurgence, and University YWCA

For information: Action for Reproductive Freedom
Box 2096 Station A, Champaign, IL 61820 • 217/352-6110

By Barbara Osborn

SLOGANS LIKE "DON'T DIE OF ignorance" and the daily photo barrage of struggling AIDS patients are enough to wither the most stalwart libido. Pleasure, a word rarely heard anymore, has been lost behind the facade of seriousness essential to medical legitimacy and political approval in government-funded sex-education campaigns.

This new asceticism reduces sex to a few fearful acts and damages the gay community particularly. Not only is sex portrayed as risky business but the Helms Amendment insures that gay sex is not acknowledged in federal AIDS-education materials. So gay sex disappears while straight people scramble for the sexual and social safety of monogamous heterosexual unions. The celebration of sexual diversity and sexual pleasure that so often in the past ruptured social repression in the gay community disappears as well.

Beyond scare tactics: Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), the largest AIDS service provider in New York City, recently released several film shorts in an attempt to put the sexual pleasure back in sex education. The *Safer Sex Shorts* are a collection of five erotic tapes that are both pro-sex and pro-safe-sex. Producers Jean Carlemusto and Gregg Bordowitz said the tapes were designed to "present options for making sex safer. We take a hard line—no pun intended—that one doesn't have to change one's behavior, only specific aspects of the behavior, to make sex safer. We advocate public sex as long as it's safer public sex."

The long and short of safer-sex shorts

Bordowitz contrasted their approach with the most familiar "Use a condom if you need to," "Stay away from people who use drugs," scare tactics. ("As if people who use drugs aren't our friends, our family, our lovers," Bordowitz remarks.) A 1987 GMHC study of the efficacy of various forms of safe-sex materials determined that explicit erotic films are more effective than other techniques in creating durable change in sexual practices.

Each *Safer Sex Short* runs about five minutes. They're designed to look like music videos and work like ads. Narrative situations are slight with virtually no dialogue. The tapes conclude with texts that reinforce the visuals.

Each tape is a sex celebration developed for a specific target group. In *Law and Order*, a black construction worker ties up a white man dressed in police leather. In *Car Service*, a businessman gets into a cab. The driver flirts with him. When they arrive at the destination, the executive can't find his wallet. Searching his pockets, he turns up condoms instead. The driver accepts and fucks his fare on the back seat. *Current Flow* opens on a woman with a vibrator. Her lover appears, unplugs the vibrator and goes down on her with a dental dam.

Mostly the tapes are like the porn you'd find in the video store down the street. The sexual heat gets

turned up with moans and groans, hip thrusts and tongue flicks—the conventional signs of lust and sex. *Current Flow* is delightfully noisy, and *Car Service* even manages to be amusing.

But these tapes aren't exactly what you'd find at the neighborhood porn house. For instance, there are no cum shots. It was easier for the

SEX ED

actors (some of them non-professionals) to pose and demonstrate than actually perform. In this respect Bordowitz likens the tapes to the posing films of the '50s. Another distinction is their multiracial casting. Video stores are full of far more extraordinary combinations, but what's remarkable about these vanilla-on-chocolate scenes is that they don't exploit difference. Neither black nor white actors are presented to the audience as exotic. Racial difference among the couples is taken for granted.

Avoiding relapses: Two porn theaters in New York City are currently showing the tapes before their feature presentations, and the producers are negotiating with porn distributors to use the tapes as trailers on VHS cassettes. GMHC also plans to use the tapes as part of their education and outreach programs to lesbian and gay groups and AIDS service organizations, including a

new education program, "Keep It Up," designed to prevent "relapses" (slipping back into unsafe sex practices) and foster lasting changes in sexual behavior.

At public screenings the tapes have aroused some, though surprisingly little, controversy among feminist anti-porn and gay activist groups. Page Mellish, president of Feminists Fighting Pornography, an anti-porn lobby, expressed disappointment at GMHC's decision to make use of conventional distributors.

"We are against the porn industry and against putting more money in their coffers. People think that gay and straight porn are separate industries, but they're not. They're the same companies. This project legitimizes the industry and makes them look like good guys," she said. In addition, a few members of the gay activist community singled out *Law and Order* for criticism because

Each tape is a sex celebration aimed at a specific target group.

of its aggressive and unromantic portrayal of gay sex.

On the other hand, Alisa Lebow, an educational producer at New York City's AIDS Discrimination Office, expressed support for the tapes for precisely the same reasons.

"The tapes are not normative," she says. "GMHC pushed the limits and crossed communities. They had to assess the potential to alienate

against the promise of reaching people who aren't usually included."

Douglas Crimp, editor of the recent book *AIDS: Cultural Analysis, Cultural Activism*, suggests that the tapes' power stems in some sense from their very objectionableness to the people outside their target community. He contends that other educational efforts have been ineffective because of the tremendous ignorance about the gay community and its subcultures. For Crimp, the strength of the tapes is that they "empower the affected communities to represent themselves."

Aware of comparable efforts abroad, Chuck Fruchtey, educational director at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, sees the tapes as a breakthrough for American AIDS efforts. Although some American gay porn producers now integrate depictions of safe sex into their scripts and didactic trailers have been added to some videotapes, GMHC's *Safer Sex Shorts* are a first in terms of letting hard-to-reach groups represent their own sex practices and eroticize them in a safe-sex context.

Bordowitz sums up GMHC's position saying, "It's impossible to institute behavior changes. All you can do is render options and picture possibilities. As long as people are engaging in a specific practice, we have a responsibility to show them how they can do it safer." GMHC's willingness to "picture possibilities," to eroticize, publicize, celebrate and educate is progressive—and not just in the struggle against AIDS. Seen in their broadest context, the tapes re-raise the slumbering question of sexual liberation. ■

Barbara Osborn is a writer living in New York.

Baal

By Bertolt Brecht
Directed by Robert Woodruff
Trinity Repertory Theater
Providence, R.I.

By Margaret Spillane

BAAL, THE EPONYMOUS ANTIHERO of Bertolt Brecht's first play, is a character who'll make you feel queasy with recognition, so unmistakable a member of the he-man bully brotherhood of 20th-century art makers is he. The opening scenes of the Trinity Rep's recent production of *Baal* could have been set in the Cedar Tavern circa 1953, with Jackson Pollock playing the lead. Baal is just the kind of dick-waving, drunk-as-a-skunk swashbuckler this era's art brokers like best.

Voracious appetite: While Baal believes it's his privilege to be a pungent, unwashed barfly, he likes his sexual victims "pure"—and plentiful. But purity is ephemeral—once touched, the pure woman becomes appalling and repulsive, a mound of suppurating flesh too vile to look upon, let alone touch.

A funny, fiery Baal and chain

In Robert Woodruff's production, Baal's voracious erotic appetite extends equally to men. These admirers are true believers, lured to Baal's altar for sacrifice after much ritual abuse. But after that first sacrament

THEATER

there is no other: should they come around later, his toy-boys get publicly flayed.

Baal demands that his lovers, male and female, understand that it's all for art: the flesh he mills and the gin he swills are just fuel demanded by the unquenchable poet-fires within. Indeed, with Mario Arrambide's corrosively commanding Baal, poetry is what intervenes whenever someone demands an explanation for a rape, a death, a treason.

At such moments Baal's voice al-

ters, becoming lyrical and priestly. He is speaking with the authority granted to him by another universe, one unknowable to those less enlightened, who feel too overawed to question its authority. But the hungry furnace demanding more bodies and more gin is not art but narcissism. As the play progresses, Baal's poetry becomes more and more perfunctory, a push-button gimmick to barter for the next drink. Soon he's a half-dressed second-string rock'n'roller in a flea-bag nightclub; he humps a doll onstage, then drives a microphone up his ass.

Diabolical good taste: The first act of Woodruff's *Baal* is a hilarious and terrifying climb up the volcano of 20th-century white male artist's privilege. That's clear from the very first scene. Mech, Baal's very own Medici, plies the young genius with eels and wine while Baal delivers the

thrill for which the mogul is shelling out the shekels: to be scathingly, sneeringly dismissed by the recipient of his corporate generosity. "Diabolical, but in good taste," intones Mech (William Damkoehler), looking like Daddy Warbucks in his shaved head and gleaming tux.

Scenes of bohemian couplings take place on a dark stage humorously illuminated by an open refrigerator. Two adolescent groupies in Catholic school uniforms wriggle out of their clothes just in time to be shooed from Baal's garret by his outraged landlady.

But the second act is about as rambling and unfocused as the drunken poet himself—and the fault lies far more with Brecht than with director Robert Woodruff. It produces the same feeling of anxious

The flesh he mills and the gin he swills are the fuel for the poet-fires within.

claustrophobia as being cornered by a real-life party drunk: the guy's in the grips of a lethal combination of booze and testosterone, and if he weren't so scary he'd bore you to death.

Woodruff lightens the burden of Brecht's monomaniacal irresolution with many comic visual touches, including cowboys dancing on stilts in Superfly trenchcoats and a priest whose bald head is tattooed with a pink crucifix. But it's a mighty long and wearying haul from intermission to the moment when Baal gets his final comeuppance as a band of lumberjacks shower him with spittle. Is Herr Brecht so sacred that he can't sustain a few well-deserved cuts?

Nonetheless, it's great to see the ever-audacious Trinity Rep being venturesome enough to stage this rarely attempted play. The questions *Baal* raises about the abuses of power by male artists and bourgeois society's endless ability to be titillated by such abuses, are reason enough to grapple with this work. *Baal* is less a great play than a great opportunity to open a dialogue. ■

Margaret Spillane is a critic living in New Haven, Conn.

Nicaragua

Continued from page 3

Chamorro officials have repeatedly promised that the new government will not attempt to "roll back" land reform. Officials have said they plan to compensate the former owners of confiscated properties with special bonds issued in a new currency. Such assurances have not assuaged wary Sandinista supporters, however, many of whom see UNO's assumption of power as a return to the Somocist past.

Attempting to head off this problem, the Sandinista-dominated national assembly has passed a series of laws to institutionalize changes made since the revolution. These include granting land titles to people now living in homes and on property taken from wealthy owners who fled Nicaragua during and after the 1979 revolution.

Another law grants immunity from prosecution for white-collar crimes that have been committed under the Sandinista government, including negligence or corruption in public ministries and businesses.

Although UNO can try to reverse some of these laws, such an action would provoke precisely the kind of confrontation top UNO advisers say they want to avoid in the name of reconciliation. The two top Chamorro advisers, former contra political director Alfredo Cesar and businessman Antonio Lacayo, are both moderate pragmatists who acknowledge that the Sandinistas wield considerable power and can, as President Daniel Ortega has often said, "govern from below."

A return to prosperity: A new political confrontation would also torpedo the new government's hopes to renew stability to spur economic recovery. The cornerstone of UNO's emergency plan is the gradual privatization of the economy, boosting production of basic goods by reducing state controls and bureaucracy.

To help accomplish this the incoming government hopes to lure exiled Nicaraguan businesspeople back to invest in the new economy. Recently a group of 80 business leaders returned to see what changes can be expected after April 25 and evaluate the future business climate.

Most members of the group lost their homes and businesses after the Sandinistas linked them to former dictator Anastasio Somoza. The current tenants of such confiscated homes include the nine top Sandinista commanders.

Encouraged by the UNO victory, the exiled business leaders say as many as 500 colleagues want to return at some point. They were less than enthusiastic, however, when Chamorro economic adviser Francisco Mayorga said the new administration would give them bonds to compensate for their losses.

"We don't want to repeat the error of the Somoza dictatorship, which concentrated the wealth in the hands of a minority, or that of the Sandinistas, where the nine coman-

ders held all the political power," Mayorga told the group. "We now have the opportunity to share Nicaragua's wealth with all social sectors."

Many of the business leaders questioned this approach, saying the confiscations were illegal and that by not evicting current tenants from the properties the government simply "legitimizes the law of the gun."

"A lot of people are now ready to come back, but unless they establish the rule of law there won't be a climate of confidence which will encourage people to invest," said Marcelo Lacayo, who lost his home and business after he left for Costa Rica. "Why not give the bonds to the people living in our homes? Make building a new home their

problem."

The gap between their interests and the stated intentions of the new government was readily apparent as Mayorga carefully pointed to the many changes that have occurred and what he called the "social problem" over the property issue.

In some places former owners have already returned to "take stock" of their former holdings. The question of property ownership will clearly be one of the trickiest the Chamorro government will have to maneuver after taking power. But it is only one of many that will confront Nicaragua as the country moves toward an uncertain future.

William Gasperini is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.

C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

NEW YORK April 11-27

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11—Juliet Ucelli; Eurocentrism (first session of six-session study group); 8 p.m.; \$50.
THURSDAY, APRIL 12—Roderick Thurton; The Bureaucratic State and the Struggle for Socialism (first session of eight-session class); 6 p.m.; \$60.
John Garvey and Mitchel Cohen; New Forms of Control in American Education; 8 p.m.; \$5.
FRIDAY, APRIL 13—Stanley Aronowitz; The Prospects for Socialism, East and West; 7 p.m.; \$5.
SATURDAY, APRIL 14—The Communist Ensemble (concert); 8 p.m.; \$7.
SUNDAY, APRIL 15—Current Events Brunch Forum; 11 a.m.; \$3.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18—Anwar Shaikh; The Political Economy of the State in Capitalist Economies (first of two lectures); 8 p.m.; \$5.
THURSDAY, APRIL 19—Warsaw Ghetto Uprising 1943; Paget Henry, Roderick Thurton and Mitchel Cohen; C.L.R. James: Implications for Revolutionary Strategy Today; 7:30 p.m.; \$5.
FRIDAY, APRIL 20—Ludlow Massacre 1914; Susan Osborn; reading from her novel *Surviving the Wreck*; 7 p.m.; \$7.
SATURDAY, APRIL 21—Knots (concert); 8 p.m.; \$7.
MONDAY, APRIL 23—Phil Hill and Matthias Platzeck; East Germany Now; 8 p.m.; \$7.
THURSDAY, APRIL 26—Basir Mchawi and Sheila Collins; Combating Eurocentrism in Education; 8 p.m.; \$5.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27—Bernard Magubane, Jennifer Davie and Elombe Brath; *Apartheid Forty Years After: A Crisis within a Crisis* (dinner and discussion); 7 p.m.; \$15.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

CHICAGO April 27-29

Racism and anti-Semitism is the focus of New Jewish Agenda's Midwest Regional Conference. Cornell West, Chairman of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Princeton University, will speak Friday evening, 7:30 p.m., on "Black/Jewish Relations." FREE and open to the public. Panelists include: Jane Ramsey Saltzman, Director of Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, formerly of the Harold Washington administration; Ron Daniels, coordinator of the African American Progressive Action Network and former Executive Director of the Rainbow Coalition; Cheryl Harris, National Co-chair of the National Conference of Black Lawyers. \$45.00 for the weekend (including meals) and \$25.00 for Saturday only. Ecumenical Institute, 4750 N. Sheridan Road.

May 4

32nd Annual Debs-Thomas-Harrington Dinner—honoring Arthur Loevy, secretary treasurer, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Featured speaker, Cecil Roberts, vice president, United Mine Workers of America, AFL-CIO: "Victory over Pittston—Lessons for the Progressive and Labor Movements." At the Midland Hotel, 172 W. Adams, 6 p.m. Tickets \$35, \$60 with message in program book. Contact Chicago DSA, 1608 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 384-0327.

May 5

"Building a DSA Agenda in the Heartland: A Conference on Organizing for the '90s." Sessions on '90s

Internationalism, Socialist-Feminism and Reproductive Rights, and Building the DSA Agenda. Workshops on Racism, Electoral Work, Labor Support, Campus Organizing, National Health. Registration: \$15, \$10 for students. Venue: Ida Noyes Hall, University of Chicago, 9 a.m. Contact Chicago DSA, 1608 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 384-0327.

July 13-14

Pledge of Resistance National Convention, July 13-14, 1990; Chicago (De Paul University). Participate in setting the political priorities, program and overall direction of the Pledge of Resistance for 1991. Learn from/share with Central American activists from around the country; participate in workshops; hear well-respected speakers; be prepared for some fun! Call (202) 328-4040 or write National Pledge of Resistance, P.O. Box 53411-3411, Washington, DC 20009-3411.

SANTA CRUZ, CA April 27

"Democratic Socialism is Alive, Well and Growing in California," state conference of DSA. Topics include: Building Unity on the Left, Socialism and the New Europe, The Rainbow and the Democrats, Latino Voting Rights, Socialism and Racism, Dealing with Sexism, Skill-building and more. Contact your local DSA or (916) 361-9072.

LOVELAND, OH May 11-12

"Women of Vision in the '90s." Enter into a multigenerational, multiracial, multicultural process to evoke your capacity as a woman to connect the inner sources of life with commitments to self, others, the world and the Mystery which is their context. Dr. Carolyn Gratton of the Institute for Formative Spirituality in Pittsburgh will begin an experimental and reflective process. For information, write or call Audrey Sorrento, Grailville Programs, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

MEDFORD, MA June 4-9

Seventh Annual Management and Community Development Institute provides professional training for board, staff and volunteers of grass-roots organizations, human-service providers and community-development groups. Choose from 44 one-day and two-day courses covering: non-profit management, fundraising, community organizing and leadership development, community economic development, affordable housing, finance and community reinvestment. Learn with accomplished practitioners and experienced teachers from New England and across the United States. For more information contact: Lincoln Filene Center, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155, (617) 381-3549.

WICHITA, KS June 22-24

Register now for Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Region II Biennial! For workshops and conversations with Mary Zepernick, president, U.S. Section WILPF; Sharon Asetoyer, Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center, Lake Andes, S.D.; Jamala Rogers, National Black Women's Health Project; Maaskelah, African-American Community Organizer; Anna Spradlin, Specialist in Conflict Resolution; Ardelle Hough, WILPF Region II observer to Nicaraguan elections; Billie Knighton, WILPF Region II representative to U.S.-Soviet women's meetings in Moscow. Special Appearances by: "Jane Addams," aka "United States' most dangerous woman"; Josie Wallenius, guerrilla theater from Toronto, Canada, and more! Men are welcome too! To register, write: Melanie Shurden, Registrar, WILPF Region II Biennial, 5206 Pembroke Circle, Wichita, KS 67220, or call (316) 687-5866.

The Great Reversal

The Privatization of China • 1978-1989

William Hinton



Recognized inside and outside China as an expert on the country's agriculture, **William Hinton** has spent five or six months there every year but one since 1978, when the wave of reform was first introduced. Having witnessed the events of June 1989 first hand, he gives authority to an analysis that digs deeper and more widely than anything else available.

William Hinton is an American farmer who has written widely on the course of Chinese development since the revolution. He is the author of the classics *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village* and *Shenfan: The Continuing Revolution in a Chinese Village*.

\$11.00 PB7948 paper \$28.00 CL793X cloth 192pp.

MONTHLY REVIEW PRESS • 122 West 27th Street, New York, NY 10001 • (212) 691-2555

Please write for our new Spring/Summer catalog

HELP WANTED

COMMUNITY JOBS, socially responsible job opportunities. Subscribe to the only monthly nationwide listing covering peace & justice, civil rights, unions, consumer advocacy, organizing, social work and more. \$12/6 issues. **COMMUNITY JOBS**, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20005.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Washington State SANE/Freeze, a 25,000-member peace organization seeks leader with supervisory, fiscal, fundraising, grass-roots organizing and peace work experience. Responsible for staffing board, overseeing annual budget of \$500,000 and 20 staff including canvass. Located in Seattle. \$21,000-\$30,000 DOE. Application, references, resume by 4/30/90 to: Chair, SANE/Freeze, 5516 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105.

DIRECTOR—12,000-member statewide peace and justice group: 12 chapters, 4 staff. Experience fundraising, development for non-profits. \$20,000+. Resume to NJ SANE/FREEZE, 89 Walnut St., Montclair, NJ 07042 by April 21. EOE.

COORDINATOR sought for multi-issue Arkansas Peace Center. Contact: APC, Box 9015, North Little Rock, AR 72119.

ENVIRONMENTAL/LABOR ORGANIZER. The National Toxics Campaign and the Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers are seeking an organizer to work with grass-roots environmental groups and industrial workers in Louisiana to: organize community groups to confront local problems, develop health and safety campaigns with chemical-industry workers, research environmental problems, handle media relations. Previous environmental, labor or other organizing experience and strong writing skills required. Salary \$20-25K. DOE. Send letter and writing sample and resume to Richard Miller, OCAW, 8841 Bluebonnet Rd., #C, Baton Rouge, LA 70810. EOE.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of multi-issue church-based community organization in Hammond, Ind., 30 minutes from Chi-

C L A S S I F I E D S

cago. Salary based on experience in neighborhood and issue organizing, fund-raising and administration; scale starting at \$21,500, plus benefits. Call Interfaith Citizens Organization at 931-5842 or send resumes to ICO, 560 Sibley St., Hammond, IN 46320.

UNION STAFF POSITION—Extremely active Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, AFL-CIO Local Union covering D.C. and State of Virginia seeks experienced representative with organizing skills to join our staff. Responsibilities include shop steward and committee training, internal organizing, grievance handling and assisting in contract fights. Must have own car, be energetic and dedicated to trade union movement. Not a 9-to-5 job. Excellent benefits, salary negotiable. Send resume to Roxie Herbekian, Staff Director, Local 32 Food and Beverage Workers Union, AFL-CIO, 1221 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

PUBLICATIONS
GAY COMMUNITY NEWS, Since 1973, the only national newsweekly covering lesbian and gay life and liberation. Each week GCN brings you the liveliest mix of news, analysis and entertainment around, as well as a monthly Book Review Supplement and special issues on topics ranging from new gay male performers to lesbian safer sex. 1 year, \$33; 6 months, \$20. GCN Subscriptions, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

The National Mobilization for Survival Education Fund has just published a booklet on the "crisis" at U.S. nuclear weapons production facilities. *Banning the Bombmakers: Challenging Nuclear Weapons Production* describes the environmental problems at each facility, the reason why the crisis is being publicized now, and the opportunity for disarmament that the DOE "crisis" presents. Copies of the 12-page booklet are \$1 each, 10 for \$5, 25 for \$10, and 100 for \$30. Please add 20% for postage and

handling. Order from MFS Education Fund, 45 John Street, #811, New York, NY 10038.

BERTHA CAPEN REYNOLDS SOCIETY. Organization of progressive social workers and human-service workers. For info on conference, newsletter, activism, write: B.C.R.S., P.O. Box 20563, New York, NY 10023.

ALTERNATIVE PRESS INDEX: TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. API is an invaluable tool for your study of social change. 250 alternative & radical publications indexed. Ask the folks at your library to subscribe. \$125/institutions, \$30/individuals. Write Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218 for more information.

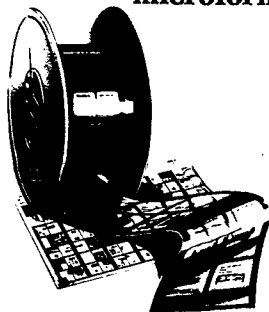
1990-91 DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE & RADICAL PUBLICATIONS. Over 300 periodicals listed, \$3.00. Write: Alternative Press Center, P.O. Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218.

FOREIGN-OWNED BRAND NAMES & CORPORATIONS—you thought were American but aren't! Booklet: \$10. R. Shutt, Box 114, Gridley, CA 95948-0114.

EDUCATION
JEWISH LIFE CENTER offering a year of exploration: Jewish identity, skills, activism in progressive community. Rabbi Julie Greenberg, B202, 6445 Greene St., Philadelphia, PA 19119, (215) 843-4345.

Engineers, Technicians, Businesspeople, Computer Professionals, Mechanics, etc.
NICARAGUA NEEDS YOU!
Volunteers are urgently needed for 2-week training and consulting positions in various governmental and non-governmental agencies. Trips leave every month. Please contact:
tecNICA, Dept. 1, 3254 Adeline St. Berkeley, CA 94703 (415) 655-3838

This publication is available in microform.



University Microfilms International reproduces this publication in microform: microfiche and 16mm or 35mm film. For information about this publication or any of the more than 13,000 titles we offer, complete and mail the coupon to University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Call us toll-free for an immediate response: 800-521-3044. Or call collect in Michigan, Alaska and Hawaii: 313-761-4700.

Please send information about these titles.

Name _____
Company/Institution _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone () _____

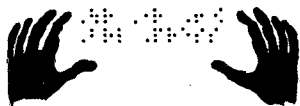
University Microfilms International

NICARAGUA'S VIEWPOINT:
Barricada Internacional
biweekly news from Managua
\$35/year; \$18/6 mo.
Sample free!
Barricada USA-I, P.O. Box 410150, S.F., CA 94141



EL SALVADOR IN BRIEF
reports barebone facts bi-weekly on El Salvador, uncovering U.S. lies & complicity, focusing on political/military events & human rights: \$12/6mo. Checks to CAIP, Box 27024, Winnipeg, Canada R3B 3K1.

The Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, selected articles from IN THESE TIMES are included in FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL (FI), a quarterly review of minority and independent Left publications, produced by the Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription to FI costs \$5. Send to: Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc., 640 Bayview, Detroit, MI 48217, (313) 842-1804.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

Did you miss our coverage of the Greenhouse Effect? Have you kept up on the recent foibles within the EPA? Or how about Africa, the new global dumping ground? It's not too late to catch up on these special issues of IN THESE TIMES:

OZONE—Delay in the Face of Disaster. Volume 12, No. 32/\$5
THE ENDLESS SUMMER—Three-part series on the Greenhouse Effect. Volume 13, Nos. 8, 10 & 12/Entire series \$10 (only 6 sets remain!)
SELLOUT AT THE EPA—Protecting Polluters, Not the Public. Volume 13, No. 38/\$5
AFRICA, THE DUMP CONTINENT—The New Toxic Colony. Volume 14, No. 2/\$3 (also includes report on Great Lakes pollution)
To order, send check or money order to
ITT-BACK ISSUES, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647 (price includes postage and handling)
Be sure to include volume and issue numbers with your order.

SPANISH STUDY

GUATEMALA. Intensive Spanish. CASA, Box 11264, Milwaukee, WI 53211, (414) 372-5570.

SPANISH in Mexico. Escuela Azteca: summer, Cuernavaca. Live with a Mexican family. Study with Professor Ross Gandy (Marx and History, Mexico 1910-1982). Spanish: three levels. Aztecs, Mayas, Juarez, Mexican Revolution. Tours of pyramids, revolutionary murals. \$170 each two weeks. Brochure: Escuela Azteca, Rio Usumacinta 710, Guernavaca, Mexico, (73) 15-24-69.

TRAVEL

CULTURAL TOURS OF THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE. Experience fine wines and cuisine of France while staying in a private chateau. Balloon trip and barge cruise included. Surprisingly affordable. Also, angler's tour. Groups limited to 18 participants. Contact De-tours, Inc., (800) 448-6088.

BOOKS

"ANARCHIST COOKBOOK". Available again! \$22, postpaid. Barricade Books, Box 1401-J, Secaucus, NJ 07096.

FOR SALE

Radical, unique tees, buttons, stickers. SASE—1113 E. College, Iowa City, IA 52240.

SEEN ANY CLIPS LATELY?

We are collecting references to *In These Times* made by other publications—quotations, excerpts, critiques, etc. If you see such a mention, please help us out by sending a copy to:
Katharine Greider
ITT
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647

AFRO-AMERICAN QUILT MAKING. Help the poor in Mississippi help themselves. Hand-quilted bags and quilts by women of Tutwiler, Miss. Original patterns, bright colors. Women earn money to support their families. More information and price list, contact: Maureen Delaney, P.O. Box 462, Tutwiler, MS 38963, (601) 345-8393.

PERSONALS

CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER links left singles, nationwide. Free sample. P.O. Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

NATIONWIDE SINGLES PHOTO MAGAZINE. Send: name, address, age. Send no money. Exchange, 1817 Welton, #1580-BA, Denver, CO 80202.

MALE professional, 40s, wants to become acquainted w/ progressive female whose interests are compatible with rural town life. Write: Surrogate, 401 NE Clark, Greenfield, IA 50849.

USED & ANTIQUARIAN BOOKS - HISTORICAL & ART PRINTS

...are what I sell. To receive my free book and print price lists and catalogues, send your name and address to...
Woodbridge Brown, PO Box 445, Turners Falls, MA 01376



T-shirts \$11
Post Paid
M-L-XL
Other designs:
Dyslexics of the World
Untie, JP
sartre for
Beane Nothingness Decaf.
Swine Coolers; Terrier
Barking Water; MORE
Send 50¢ for catalogue
of cards and T-shirts
to CARD ATTACK-Box
10264 Chicago, 60610-0264

IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Grab Attention

...and work like your own sales force. Your message will reach 96,000 responsive readers each week (72% of them made a mail-order purchase last year). ITT classies deliver a big response for a little cost.

Word Rates:

90¢ per word / 1 or 2 issues
80¢ per word / 3-5 issues
75¢ per word / 6-9 issues
70¢ per word / 10-19 issues
60¢ per word / 20 or more issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1 or 2 issues
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
\$22 per inch / 20 or more issues

All classified ads must be prepaid. Ad deadline is Friday, 12 days before the date of publication. All issues dated on Wednesday.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ week(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send to: IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.

Postcards and T-Shirts for the Overqualified!

"AMERICA IS LIKE A MELTING POT—THE PEOPLE AT THE BOTTOM GET BURNED AND THE SCUM FLOATS TO THE TOP"

—Charlie King

YOUR FRIDGE WILL LOVE US!

Philosophy, psychology, cats, American Leftists (gulp!) and much more lampooned by Jennifer Berman.

For your almost free catalog of goodies, please send 75¢ in stamps to: Humerus Cartoons • Jennifer Berman P.O. Box 6614 • Evanston, IL • 60204-6614

100% RECYCLED PAPER!



The Perfect Gift!

Our HOME PACK contains:

375 napkins 50 envelopes
200 facial tissues 8 rolls toilet paper
100 sheets writing/ 4 rolls paper
typing paper towels

Only \$24.95 (+\$3 shipping & handling)
Send check or m.o. to

Atlantic Recycled Paper Co.

P.O. Box 11021 • Baltimore, MD 21212

